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JUNE 11, 2004

Birds of a feather

George Deavours plays time-honored drag queen in local 'La Cage' revival.

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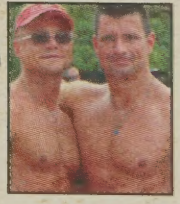

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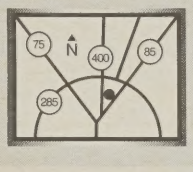

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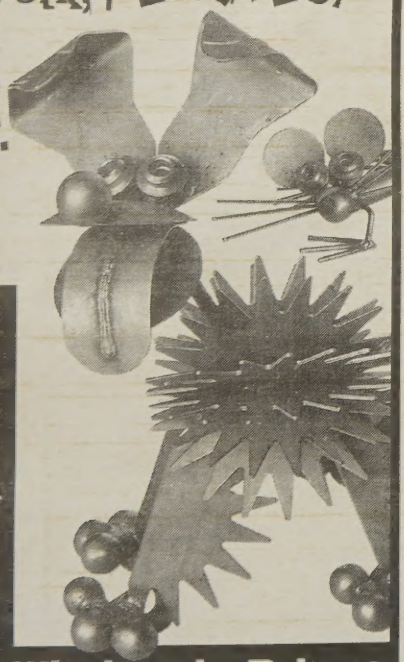

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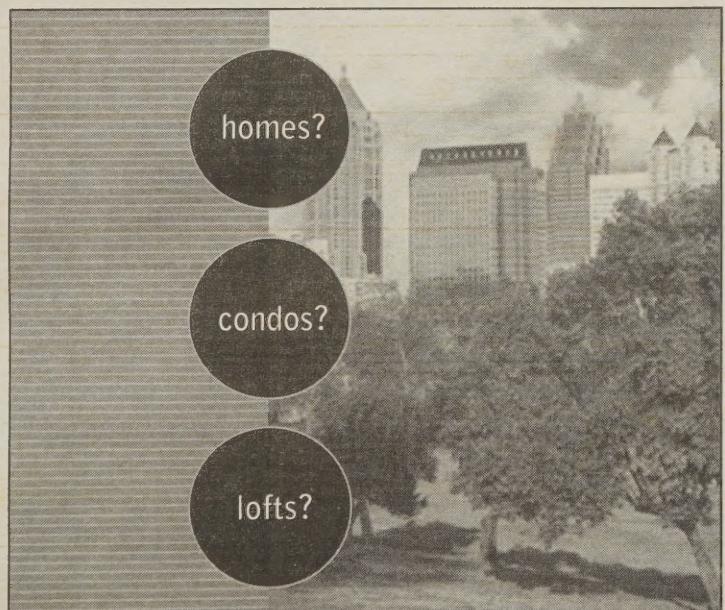

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atlanta news

Franklin meets with gay leaders

Activists remain staunchly loyal despite 'communication issues'

By RYAN LEE

Preparing to face what some call the biggest test of her loyalty to gay Atlantans, Mayor Shirley Franklin met with 18 representatives of gay organizations last week where she repeated her commitment to gay civil rights.

But Franklin stopped short of saying whether she would levy penalties against the Druid Hills Golf Club, which is in the middle of a pitched battle over the city's non-discrimination ordinance.

In January, the Human Relations Commission ruled the club violated the ordinance when it refused to grant spousal benefits to the domestic partners of two gay members.

"We want to protect the ordinance as well as respond fairly," Franklin told those attending the nearly one-hour meeting on June 3. "We want to take actions that are winning options."

The non-discrimination ordinance gives Franklin wide discretion in how to sanction the golf club, from sending a written reprimand to revoking its business or liquor licenses. Druid Hills officials have warned that they will challenge the ordinance in court if the mayor penalizes the club.

Lee Kyser, one of the gay members seeking spousal benefits for her city-recognized domestic partner, said Franklin's comments are not encouraging.

"It sounds like she may be leaving room not to take the harshest punishment," Kyser said. "I don't know how issuing penalties against the club will do anything but protect the ordinance. I think [Franklin's comment] says you can't count on the city to defend the ordinance."

Breakfast meeting

The early-morning session with the leaders of gay and AIDS organizations last week was organized by Luz Borrero, Franklin's deputy chief operating officer.

Besides the Druid Hills case, Franklin reiterated her support of efforts to fight HIV, provided updates on projects her administration is working on and listened as some criticized her lack of visibility at high-profile gay functions.

Franklin's chief of staff, the city attorney and Borrero joined Franklin at the meeting.

Critics faulted the mayor for not attending the Human Rights Campaign Dinner last month, accepting — then rejecting — an invitation to speak to the Atlanta Executive Network in June, and for being non-committal about attending Gay Pride later this month.

Mayor **Shirley Franklin** attended the HRC Dinner in 2002 with **Gary Cox**, her former deputy chief operating officer. Franklin skipped the event last month. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

In past years, Franklin has attended the HRC Dinner and Pride events.

"My schedule changes all the time," Franklin said during an interview on Wednesday. "I don't attend every meeting or event of any one group.

"I will continue to be involved in gay and lesbian events because I enjoy being with people who are fighting for their human rights," she added.

southern VOICE COVER STORY

Glen Paul Freedman, executive director of AEN and an attendee at the June 3 meeting, said he admires Franklin's steady support of gay issues. But he fears her absences at key events may send the wrong message to gay supporters, he said.

"My personal belief is that this mayor is really good on our issues, and I don't want the mayor to be in a position of being perceived of ignoring our community except during campaign time," Freedman said. "I was very pleased the mayor took the time to meet with us and hear the concerns of the LGBT community so we can help bridge the gap that I think is there."

Franklin's gay support

In the 2001 mayoral campaign, Franklin was among a trio of candidates who aggressively courted gay voters. She tapped Gary Cox, a veteran gay political operative, as her deputy campaign manager.

In June 2001, she rode through the Gay Pride parade wearing a red lei and a T-shirt with a rainbow logo on it. A few months later, Franklin secured the endorsements of Georgia Equality, the Georgia Stonewall Democrats and Southern Voice.

Sharon Semmens, board chair of Georgia Equality, said the Franklin campaign pledged to include gay members in her administration, promote gay tourism, partner with community-based organizations to address AIDS, enforce the city's non-discrimination policy and use her office as a bully pulpit on gay issues.

"Mayor Franklin has diligently pursued the commitments she made to our community during her campaign," Semmens said in an e-mail interview.

Semmens also attended the June 3 session with Franklin.

Franklin made good on two of her campaign promises in May 2002 when she appointed Cox to serve as deputy chief operating officer and announced the creation of a gay tourism initiative with a $20,000 grant she helped secure from state officials.

"She certainly gets the credit for coming to us and saying we need to [create the initiative]," said Gregory Pierce, chief financial officer and vice president of technology for the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau, which runs the initiative. "But while she started the initiative, it's really been ours as to how it's maintained and funded."

Federal funding for AIDS programs is by law distributed through Fulton County, not the city of Atlanta. But Jeff Graham, executive director of AIDS Survival Project, said he has "never seen a mayor so willing to get out and work with the community to fight against HIV and AIDS."

"I think this is an issue she genuinely cares about as a person," said Graham, another attendee at the June 3 meeting. "Her role in fighting AIDS is really just providing leadership and making people aware that HIV and AIDS continues to have a devastating impact on all of Atlanta."

Gay official hired

Since taking office in January 2002, Franklin said she has focused much of her attention on balancing the city's budget and fulfilling a federal court order to upgrade a decaying sewer system. The mayor championed a controversial water rate increase and successfully lobbied the General Assembly to approve legislation that allows city voters to increase the sales tax to pay for sewer repairs.

Last year, as the city's sewer crisis deepened, Franklin lost her highest-ranking gay staff member. Cox was placed on unpaid leave last September after his arrest on charges stemming from allegedly soliciting sex from a male teen. A trial is scheduled for late September.

The leaders of some gay organizations said they fear that not having an openly gay adviser contributed to Franklin's less frequent attendance at gay events.

"The mayor is very savvy and smart, but there's nobody there for us on the inside that can give our community hope that we have the mayor's ear," Freedman said. "I would hope that the mayor's staff understands the importance of having the mayor present at major LGBT events this year and next, because not being there leads our community to believe that she doesn't care."

Semmens said the departure of Cox — along with that of Cathy Woolard, a lesbian who resigned in April as city council president — may have hurt the mayor's communication with gays residents, but not her support of gay issues.

"The absence of both of them has, of course, had an impact on the ability of the mayor to be as immediately responsive as

Please see MAYOR FRANKLIN on Page 10

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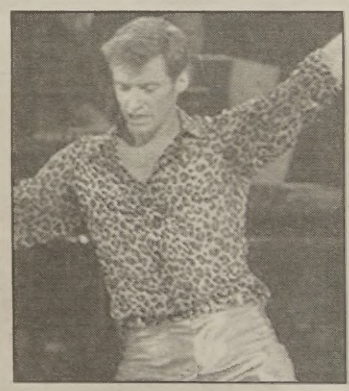
MUSIC MEN: The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus honors male movie icons including **Fred Astaire** with its 'Reel Men' concert next weekend. **Out on the Town, Page 43**



GAY TONYS: The 2004 Tony Awards continued musical theater's reputation for gay-inclusive content, nominees and winners — including host **Hugh Jackman**, who won a Tony for playing a gay songwriter. **Television, Page 51**

correction

An article in the June 4 Southern Voice ('Fighting for everything') includes an incorrect date for an appearance by Rev. Brent Hawkes at First MCC of Atlanta. Hawkes is scheduled to appear June 13 at 11 a.m. Southern Voice regrets the error.

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atlanta news

Four gay candidates seek General Assembly seats

State a 'standout' for number of gay hopefuls, lobby group says

By RYAN LEE

At least four openly gay candidates are running for the Georgia General Assembly, making the state a leader in fielding queer candidates this election cycle, according to the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund.

"The only other state besides Georgia that I'm aware of that has had such an increase in the number of gay candidates is Massachusetts," said Robin Brand, vice president of campaigns and elections at the Washington D.C.-based Victory Fund, which works to elect openly gay candidates.

"Both of those states are standouts," Brand said.

State Rep. Karla Drenner (D-Avondale Estates), Georgia's only openly gay lawmaker, seeks her third term in the state House. Drenner is running unopposed for the District 86 seat, her second consecutive election without a challenger.

In District 57, Alex Wan wants to become the first openly gay man and first Asian American to be elected to the state House. In the Democratic primary for the in-town district that includes Morningside, Ansley Park and Virginia-Highland, Wan faces state Rep. Pat Gardner, a gay-friendly incumbent.

Tracy Duncan, a lobbyist for labor issues in the General Assembly for four years, is running as a Democrat for the House in District 82, which includes parts of DeKalb County. Duncan faces Kevin Levitas in the Democratic primary.

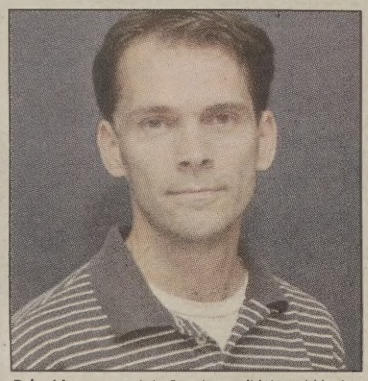
Robert Lee hopes to become the first openly gay man elected to the state Senate in District 10, which includes parts of DeKalb and Henry counties. Six other candidates are in the race: Shirley Cummings-Reams, Emanuel Jones, George Maddox, Sabrina McKenzie, Randy Mills and Derrick Alexander Pope.

"Politics is something I've always had an interest in, and when this Senate seat became open, I thought now was the time to go for it," said Lee, 47.

The District 10 seat opened when Sen. Nadine Thomas decided against running for re-election to seek the Democratic nomination for the 4th District Congressional seat.

Raising funds 'overwhelming'

Lee plans to focus his campaign on urban growth, transportation and the environment. But his sexual orientation came up during a candidate forum last month, he said.



Robert Lee, a gay state Senate candidate, said he is surprised at the lack of support from gay political groups for his campaign. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

"The second question to the candidates was, 'Do you support civil unions or legal rights for same-sex couples,'" Lee said. "I was the last to answer and I said, 'As an openly gay man, I certainly do.'"

There was no audible reaction to his comment from opponents or the roughly 40-member audience, according to Lee. But two men did approach after the forum to thank him for his words.

"I'm hoping that [my sexual orientation] is something the constituents can look past," said Lee, who described his district as heavily African-American and Democratic.

Duncan, who is campaigning on job creation and is already endorsed by the Atlanta Labor Council and the Georgia AFL-CIO, hopes his sexual orientation doesn't become a factor in his district, which is about 55 percent Republican, he said.

"Because of the numbers shifting toward more Republican, it probably will be an issue," said Duncan, 42. "But I think it's a very diverse community, so I really don't think it will hurt much."

Both Duncan and Lee said raising funds for their campaigns is more challenging than they imagined.

"The fundraising part — the best way I can describe it is overwhelming," Duncan said.

Their experience generating campaign dollars is typical, according to Brand of the Victory Fund.

"It's always the hardest part of running a campaign," she said.

First-time candidates tend to struggle establishing a funding base, usually relying on friends and family to finance their first campaign, Brand said. In order to be considered for a Victory Fund endorse-

Please see GAY CANDIDATES on Page 8

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atlanta news

Many agencies returning to AIDS Walk

Public feud over annual event doesn't dissuade some beneficiaries

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

In the wake of a months-long public feud over the future of AIDS Walk Atlanta, several of the 16 organizations that took part in the event last year confirmed this week that little has actually changed on the contracts that AID Atlanta sent out for the 2004 walk.

"For this year, I don't think there are going to be significant changes," said Jeff Graham, executive director of AIDS Survival Project.

The contracts issued by AID Atlanta, which stages the annual event, offer some incentive increases for beneficiary organizations, but those increases are slight, according to the AIDS service agencies contacted this week by Southern Voice.

Officials with AID Atlanta will not publicly release a copy of the contract until after the June 15 deadline for submission, according to Kim Anderson, executive director of AID Atlanta.

"At that time, AID Atlanta will be able to provide more details on the AIDS service organizations that are participating in AIDS Walk Atlanta 2004," Anderson said in a written statement.

AID Atlanta and MZA Events, the Los Angeles-based company that produced AIDS Walk Atlanta for 10 of its 13 years, have been trading barbs since last November when AID Atlanta terminated its contract with MZA.

Craig Miller, president of MZA, repeatedly claimed that AID Atlanta should distribute proceeds from the walk more evenly among benefiting agencies. He also pledged that he would produce a walk separate from AID Atlanta's event if the beneficiaries called on him to do so.

Miller was unavailable for comment this week, a spokesperson said.

Last month, AID Atlanta announced that it plans to produce the event with Afterglow Productions, a company headed by Keith Fenton, a former office manager for MZA in 1996 and 1997 — two of the years that MZA produced AIDS Walk.

In a survey by Southern Voice this week, six of 16 benefiting organizations that took part in the event last year confirmed that they plan to participate in the October walk: Absolute Wellness, AID Gwinnett, AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta, Aniz, Inc., Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network, and Project Open Hand.

"AID Atlanta is the group we have always worked with, and that's who we intend to continue working with," said Tom Garner, executive director of AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta.

Denise Norris, executive director of Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network, said the organization plans to participate this year but would like to see changes in the contractual structure for the 2005 walk.

"We decided to move forward as a benefiting organization for this year. However, we are looking forward to a collaborative effort the following year," Norris said.

Last year, AID Atlanta and the 16 other local agencies benefiting from the AIDS Walk received all of the funds raised by the walkers on their individual teams. In addition, AID Atlanta, as the chief beneficiary of the walk, pocketed the remaining proceeds from the event after expenses were deducted.

Beneficiaries that raised at least $7,500 and provided required volunteer hours also were scheduled to receive a bonus of $5,000 if the walk raised a total of $1.35 million.

Eight of the benefiting organizations' teams, including AID Atlanta, exceeded the $7,500 marker. But the event last year raised $1.13 million, so no bonus funds were disbursed.

Sherry Meltz, executive director of Absolute Wellness, the BRAC Center, said that her organization was grateful to be included and pleased with the incentive increases.

"If we raised the same amount we raised last year, we would get a higher percentage," Meltz said.

But that percentage might not be enough to lure back the National AIDS Education & Services for Minorities as a beneficiary, said Rudolph Carn, executive director of NAESM.

"The majority of money goes to AID Atlanta, and we are trying to get AID Atlanta to renegotiate the percentage of money they take off the top," Carn said.

Some 35 to 40 percent of the walk's proceeds go to benefiting organizations, and 60 to 65 percent of proceeds go to AID Atlanta, he said.

Officials with AIDS Survival Project, AIDS Treatment Initiatives and Jerusalem House said they haven't decided whether or not to participate in the walk this year.

Officials with Haven Health Charitable Foundation, Home But Not Alone, Our Common Welfare, Outreach, Inc., Positive Impact, and Sister Love did not respond to interview requests.

The public dispute between MZA and AID Atlanta seemed to have little effect on the walk, according to the beneficiaries contacted by Southern Voice.

"If [MZA] could deliver all the things that they are saying should be changed — in all their history with the walk — why haven't they made it happen?" said Larry Laiman, executive director of AID Gwinnett.

Christopher Seely can be reached at cseely@sovo.com.

A months-long public sparring match between the organizer of AIDS Walk Atlanta and the event's former producer did little to change how proceeds will be distributed for the event this October, according to beneficiaries of the event. (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

Some 17 organizations benefited from AIDS Walk Atlanta in 2003. The groups, along with the amount they raised for the event

Absolute Wellness, The BRAC Center, $13,818
National AIDS Education & Services for Minorities, $3,236.09
AID Gwinnett $28,794.31
AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta $1,896
AIDS Survival Project, $9,018
AIDS Treatment Initiatives, $11,617
Aniz, Inc., $1,104.75
Atlanta Interfaith AIDS Network, $25,360.64
AID Atlanta, $25,469
Haven Health Charitable Foundation, $2,817
Jerusalem House, $8,930
Home But Not Alone, $1,539
Our Common Welfare, $1,406
Outreach, Inc., $0
Positive Impact, $25,262.67
Project Open Hand, $1,115
Sister Love, $1,386

Source: AID Atlanta

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atlanta news

'Activist' judges targeted

Gay-friendly justice and Christian Coalition candidate battle for state Supreme Court

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

The re-election bid of Georgia Supreme Court Justice **Leah Sears** is being targeted by opponents who want to replace her with a conservative jurist in the July 20 elections. (Photo by Robb D. Cohen)

With little more than a month left before the July 20 primaries, judicial candidates are ratcheting up their campaigns, but how they solicit votes has become a source of contention.

The high-profile race for a seat on the Georgia Supreme Court pits gay-friendly Justice Leah Sears against Grant Brantley, the challenger who seeks support from Republicans and the Christian Coalition of Georgia.

"I was a conservative judge and not an activist judge," Brantley said during the GOP convention last month in reference to his history as a Republican judge in Cobb County.

Sears joined the high court in 1992 and sided with the majority opinion in 1998 overturning the state's sodomy law.

"I'm not an activist judge," Sears told Southern Voice this week. "But I sense that I'm being targeted."

Sears has become the "face of the 'activist' judge" being targeted by religious conservatives, according to Kathleen Womack, past president of the Stonewall Bar Association, a gay legal group.

Stonewall Bar Association and Georgia Equality are co-hosting a forum June 16 for voters to meet judicial candidates. Georgia Equality endorsed Sears and is expected to issue endorsements in other races following the forum.

Neither Sears nor Brantley are scheduled to attend the forum, but four of the six candidates for the Georgia Court of Appeals are set to appear, as are 27 of 32 judicial candidates for Fulton and DeKalb courts, according to Womack.

In state Supreme Court campaign, Sears and Brantley are taking disparate approaches.

Brantley completed a survey sent to judicial candidates by the Christian Coalition last month. The questionnaire asked about controversial U.S. Supreme Court rulings about abortion and gay rights, among others.

Brantley and the Christian Coalition did not respond to interview requests.

Sears refused to answer the questionnaire, claiming it is unethical.

"Those were U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and as such they are the law of the land, and a judge has to follow the laws of the land," Sears said. "It doesn't matter what you personally believe."

Instead, Sears signed a pledge from the Georgia Committee for Ethical Judicial Campaigns that asks candidates to refrain from stating positions on controversial matters that may come before them on the court.

"We have seen some highly unethical conduct — misleading statements, pressuring individuals to give money, pandering to special interest groups," said Bill Ide, chair of the Georgia Committee for Ethical Judicial Campaigns.

The state Supreme Court race is one of the two most important judicial races on the ballot July 20, according to Womack.

The Supreme Court rules on what the constitution means, which could become important if a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage is approved by voters in November, she said.

But county superior court races "are the ones that really have more power over decisions affecting our lives," Womack said.

Superior Court judges decide custody, visitation, adoption, second-parent adoption, gay divorces, name changes for same-sex couples and transgendered persons, .

"We certainly want to make sure we have Superior Court judges who are fair and impartial and don't carry any built-in prejudice against GLBT citizens," Womack said.

The vote on July 20 determines the nonpartisan judicial races. The voter registration deadline is June 21.

Christopher Seely can be reached at cseely@sovo.com.

MORE INFO

Judicial Candidate Forum
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Candidates scheduled to attend
Georgia Court of Appeals: Debra Bernes, William Hawkins, Lee Elizabeth Wallace, Thomas Rawlings
Fulton County Superior Court: Judge Wendy Shoob, Robert Matlock, Judge Bensonetta Tipton Lane, Mark Spix, Judge Gail Tusan, Ural Glanville, Robert Hulsey, Jim Altman, Pat Jackson, Michael Johnson, Bill Riley, Mike Wallace
DeKalb County Superior Court: Judge Cynthia J. Becker, Celeste Brewer, Henry Hibbert, Frederick Jackson, Mark Scott, Rodney Zell
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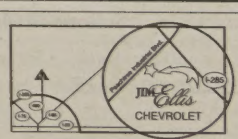

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Gay candidates seek General Assembly seats

GAY CANDIDATES, continued from Page 4

ment, candidates must prove themselves competitive, she said.

The Victory Fund already endorsed Drenner and Wan but hasn't announced other endorsements in Georgia.

Duncan and Lee said they plan to apply for the Victory Fund endorsement. But Lee added that his campaign has received a lukewarm reception from gay political groups.

"I've been somewhat disappointed by the gay community's reaction to my campaign," Lee said. "Even though my district is far from being the heart of the gay community, I just thought there would be a little more interest there than it's actually been."

The Victory Fund has two high-profile fundraisers planned for Wan in the coming weeks. On June 24, the Atlanta law firm Alston & Bird hosts an event. On July 16 and 17, Chrissy Gephardt — the lesbian daughter of U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) — come to Atlanta to help raise money for Wan.

The Victory Fund is also co-hosting a fundraiser June 17 for Cathy Woolard, a lesbian and former Atlanta City Council president who is running for the 4th District Congressional seat, which encompasses much of DeKalb County. She faces Thomas, state Sens. Liane Levetan and Connie Stokes, former Congress member Cynthia McKinney and Chris Vaughn in the Democratic primary.

The openly gay candidates are all Democrats, but Georgia Log Cabin Republicans supports state Rep. Jill Chambers (R-Decatur) in her re-election bid.

Chambers stood with gay constituents by twice voting against a proposed state constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage. She was the only Republican to do so.

A Log Cabin fundraiser for Chambers is scheduled for June 15. Chambers faces Democrat Eric Ponder in the District 81 race.

Municipal races

Openly gay candidates are also running for city council seats in Atlanta and Columbus.

Keisha Sean Waites, a federal loan officer, was disqualified from the Atlanta City Council District 12 race after city election officials charged she did not meet the residence requirements, which dictate that candidates live in their districts at least one year before qualifying to run.

Waites, 31, said she moved to her current residence in April 2003, some 13 months before she qualified to run. She filed an appeal and provided the city with voter registration and driver's license records, she said. A Fulton County judge could rule on the matter next week, according to Waites.

State Rep. **Jill Chambers** is supported by the Georgia Log Cabin Republicans in her re-election to District 81, which includes Decatur. Chambers was the only Republican in the General Assembly to twice vote against an anti-gay marriage amendment.

If the appeal falls in favor of Waites, she faces John Royal, Joyce Sheperd and Timothy Smith for the District 12 post, which encompasses southwest Atlanta.

In Columbus, Jeremy Hobbs is running for city council and hopes voters will focus on his platform of roadway improvements and legalizing Sunday alcohol sales more than his sexual orientation, he said.

"Columbus is a quiet town if you keep your business to yourself," said Hobbs, 29. "It's really saddening that we're not as far as Atlanta is when it comes to having a lot of openly gay people."

Ryan Lee can be reached at **rlee@sovo.com.**

MORE INFO

Jill Chambers fundraiser
June 15, 5:30 p.m.
Albert's Art & Mirrors
777 Miami Circle
www.garep81.net
404-229-1202

Cathy Woolard fundraiser
June 17, 6 p.m.
Red Chair Restaurant & Video Lounge
550-C Amsterdam Ave.
www.cathywoolard.com
404-377-3191

Alex Wan fundraiser
June 24, 6 p.m.
Alston & Bird LLP
1201 W. Peachtree St.
www.alexwan.org
404-892-3766

Tracy Duncan
www.duncanforgeorgia.com

Robert Lee
www.leeforgeorgia.com

Keisha Waites
www.keishawaites.com

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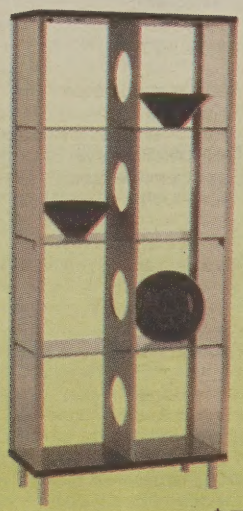
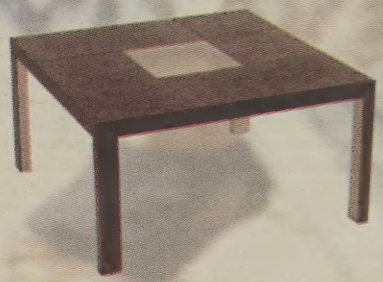
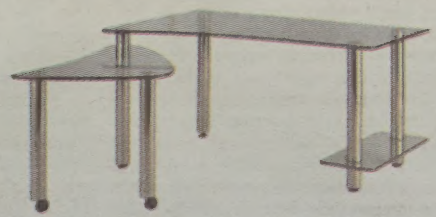


"Kelly" Display Cabinet **$598**



"Kelly" Square Dining Table **$698**



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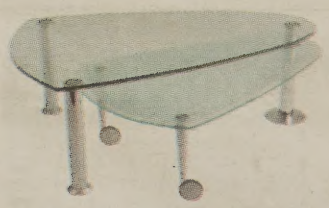

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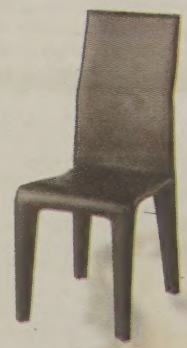

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atlanta news

Franklin remains non-committal on attending Pride

MAYOR FRANKLIN, continued from Page 3

perhaps she, and the GLBT community, would prefer," Semmens said. "I do not believe that the communication issues we are currently experiencing have effected the mayor's commitment to, or willingness to champion, the rights of our community."

But Franklin said Wednesday that Borrero, like Cox, is gay. Borrero joined the Franklin administration in January. When she was appointed, and during the session with gay leaders last week, neither Franklin nor Borrero said the deputy chief operating officer is gay.

Borrero did not respond to interview requests by press time.

Mayor **Shirley Franklin** has attended Gay Pride events since at least 2001, when she walked a portion of the parade route (left) and spent time greeting supporters in Piedmont Park in 2003 (right). Franklin has not committed to attending the event later this month. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood)

Missed meetings

Freedman said AEN invited Franklin to speak in June and August, but Franklin was unable to attend either meeting, even after confirming the June appearance. Last week, Freedman invited the mayor to speak to the group in September, but she did not say if she would attend.

Franklin previously said she would not be present at Gay Pride events later this month, an event she's attended for three consecutive years. Franklin is instead scheduled to attend the U.S. Conference of Mayors in Boston.

But at the recent breakfast with gay leaders, she said she would try to return to Atlanta in time to attend the final hours of Pride.

"Most definitely I would love to see her there for our event, but if her plans are as such that she can't, we have no control over that," said Donna Narducci, executive director of the Atlanta Pride Committee.

Narducci, during last week's meeting with Franklin, again invited the mayor to attend and speak from the stage on June 27.

Joshua Lesser, the gay rabbi of Congregation Bet Haverim, said gay Atlantans should consider the larger picture. Lesser attended the June 3 meeting.

"Obviously I think our community needs to mature a bit in terms of our expectations of our leaders," Lesser said. "It's great when she can be at the HRC Dinner and Pride, and it's a statement, but she doesn't have to be there every year."

Lesser said gay men and lesbians must also reach out to Franklin to learn how they can help advance her agenda for the entire city. They also need to focus on Franklin's gay-inclusive policies, not symbolic appearances, he said.

"We might be able to have a more visible mayor, but we're not going to have a more supportive mayor," Lesser said.

But Freedman said Franklin's appearances impact her effectiveness on gay issues.

"I want this mayor to be successful, and being successful means you have to be seen," Freedman said.

Franklin expressed similar sentiments during the breakfast with gay leaders.

"Hopefully, I can avoid the problem in future months about attendance at meetings," Franklin said. "That's not an excuse, it's rather an explanation. I can't move an agenda in city government unless I have a high level presence."

Bar clashed

Throughout her administration, Franklin has been at odds with bar owners in the city, with gay bar owners among her harshest critics.

During the General Assembly session in 2003, Franklin worked behind the scenes to kill a bill sponsored by gay state Rep. Karla Drenner (D-Avondale Estates) that would have allowed counties or municipalities to hold referendums authorizing Sunday liquor sales.

The bill was drafted by the gay Bar Owners Association and Drenner, a route Franklin had urged them to take. The mayor's efforts to kill the bill shocked Drenner and others at the time.

"I'm definitely upset about this," Drenner said in April 2003. "It's one thing to lose a bill you worked on all year and that your community asked you to carry for them — it's another to have it torpedoed by friends and purposeful misinformation."

Franklin denied lobbying against the bill, despite representatives from her administration testifying against it in a committee hearing, and comments from state lawmakers who said she personally lobbied them to vote against the measure.

Last December, Franklin signed an ordinance passed by the city council closing bars at 3 a.m., an hour earlier, as a way to quell violence in the club-heavy Buckhead Village.

A few months later the Franklin administration was again lobbying the state legislature to defeat a bill sponsored by Drenner that would create a statewide closing time, said Michael Clutter, owner of the gay bar Bulldogs.

"Thus far the actions and support of Mayor Franklin and the city council have put Atlanta at a competitive disadvantage to areas that serve alcohol later," Clutter said. "I would hope that those that wanted to make Atlanta the international city we all thought it could be will remember her actions [when she seeks re-election in 2005]."

Then and now, Franklin said she favored earlier closing time for Atlanta's bars because the city did not have enough police to ensure safety late into the night.

"The city of Atlanta does not have the resources yet — yet — to manage a 24-hour city with bars open late," Franklin said Wednesday.

But in a rare moment of harmony with gay bar owners, the Franklin administration worked with owners of the Metro Video Bar in July 2003 to allow the bar to serve a 30-day suspension of its alcohol license over an extended period, instead of 30 consecutive days.

"All of our negotiations surrounded trying to find a way to satisfy the penalty imposed [on the club] without completely disrupting ... business. The city understood that," Metro lawyer Hakim Hilliard said when the agreement was reached.

Bob Whitelaw, chair of the Georgia Stonewall Democrats and an attendee at the June 3 session, said the controversy over bar hours isn't a gay issue, but rather a sign that Franklin is listening to affluent Buckhead residents who complained about late-night traffic and crime.

The big test

In the coming weeks, Franklin will be tested on two of her campaign pledges — that she would use her office as a "bully pulpit" on behalf of gay rights, and that she would "vigorously and aggressively enforce" the city's non-discrimination law.

After making only one public appearance to state her opposition to the proposed amendment banning gay marriage, Franklin told gay leaders last week that she's unsure it is productive for her to publicly campaign against the amendment, which will appear on the November ballot.

Her public opposition to the amendment could cause a backlash among conservative voters who favor the amendment as a way to strike back against Franklin and Atlanta, which they view as liberal, she said.

Many gay leaders at the session agreed with the mayor.

"Atlanta is the city of sin for the entire state," said Bradley Smith, founder of Don't Amend Atlanta, a grassroots group that formed earlier this year to oppose the amendment.

"The rest of the state resents Atlanta, and for her to make a big statement, I'm not sure it helps us," he said.

Kris Pierce, the campaign manager for Georgia Equality's battle against the amendment, said Franklin's ability to be an effective ally goes beyond her ability or willingness to speak out against the marriage amendment.

"The mayor has already committed her support to reach out to others in a facilitation role," Pierce said in an e-mail interview. "She will be a very effective ally by opening doors and creating introductions to all sectors of our community. Her role as facilitator will be a true effective key to our success."

Franklin said despite her lack of public pronouncements against the amendment, her opposition to the measure is clear.

"Anyone can get on radio or television to espouse their ideas — whether that is helpful or not is another thing," Franklin said. "There isn't anyone in Atlanta who thinks I support that amendment."

Franklin also faces a test in deciding how to approach the case against the Druid Hills Golf Club. Two gay members of the club are calling for the stiffest penalties. Golf club officials are threatening a lawsuit if any sanctions are levied.

Franklin this week refused to comment on the case while it is under review.

Kyser said she expects gay men and lesbians to be "outraged" if the mayor doesn't issue penalties.

"The golf club is not even denying that discrimination occurred, so what does she think is going to be a stronger case to test the ordinance with," Kyser said. "I think if she doesn't defend the ordinance on this case, then it sends out the message that the ordinance is not defendable, so what good is it."

Semmens also placed emphasis on Franklin's pending ruling.

"I believe the [Druid Hills] issue is an important test of the city's non-discrimination ordinance, and consequently represents an opportunity for the mayor to re-affirm her commitment, made during her campaign, to vigorously enforce the ordinance," Semmens said. "If the ordinance isn't enforced at its very first test, many, inside and outside the gay community, will perceive the ordinance as having no teeth.

"I think the gay community expects Mayor Franklin to honor her commitment not to tolerate discrimination against members of our community," Semmens added.

Franklin must consider the long-term viability of the ordinance, and gay Atlantans ought not demand that she take actions that would make the measure vulnerable in court, Lesser said.

"I have no doubt she feels what is happening at Druid Hills is unfair and violates the ordinance, but this case will set a precedent, and so I think she needs to be thoughtful in what her response will be," Lesser said. "Her response may not be everything the gay community or the two gay members want, but I believe her decision will be something supportive of our community."

Ryan Lee can be reached at rlee@sovo.com.

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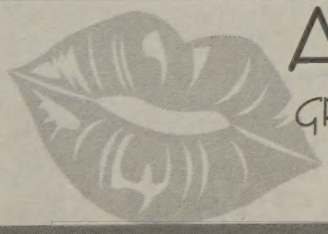

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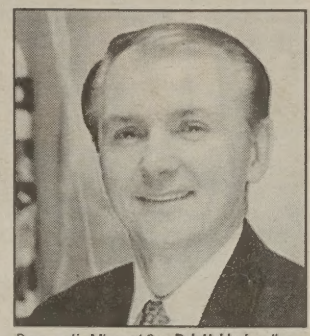
national news

Missourians to vote on gay marriage in August

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — In a victory for the Democrats, Missourians are scheduled to vote in August — not in November — on a proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage. Under pressure from Missouri's Supreme Court, Republican Secretary of State Matt Blunt agreed last week to put the measure on the ballot this summer. The Democrats did not want the contentious issue to get tangled up in the November general election. Political observers said the gay marriage amendment would draw lots of conservatives to the polls and give a boost to President Bush and Blunt, who is running for governor. In a 6-1 decision June 3, the state Supreme Court did not directly order Blunt to put the issue on the August ballot, but said he should. Shortly after the ruling, a Blunt spokesperson said the secretary of state would follow the court's wishes. Democratic Gov. Bob Holden had called for an August vote shortly after legislators passed the proposed amendment.



Democratic Missouri Gov. **Bob Holden's** call earlier this year to put a proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage on the August ballot in the state was realized last week after the state Supreme Court sided with the governor.

Calif. student sues over ban of anti-gay T-shirt

POWAY, Calif. — A Christian student who believes homosexuality is wrong is suing Poway Unified School for barring him from wearing a T-shirt expressing an anti-gay message, the San Diego Union-Tribune reported last week. "I was appalled that my school would take such a controversial issue and only allow one side to be heard," Tyler Chase Harper, 16, told the Union-Tribune. Alliance Defense Fund attorney Robert Tyler said Harper's T-shirt did not constitute hate speech and that he should not have been punished by the school for wearing it, the newspaper reported. The slogan "Homosexuality is Shameful" and a reference to Romans 1:27 in the Bible were printed on the shirt, the newspaper stated. Harper wore the shirt on the school's annual Day of Silence, which draws attention to discrimination and harassment against gay students, the Union-Tribune reported. Harper wore a shirt the next day that stated, "Be ashamed" and "Our school embraced what God has condemned."

Mich. mayor officiates at mass gay wedding to show support

FERNDALE, Mich. (AP) — Nearly a dozen gay and lesbian couples pledged their love and commitment Saturday in a symbolic marriage ceremony officiated by the mayor of this Detroit suburb. A handful of protesters silently lined the sidewalk in front of City Hall, where the couples and Mayor Robert Porter gathered under a blue and pink banner that proclaimed: "To love, honor and be recognized." The ceremonies carried no legal weight, but were part of the weekend's Motor City Pride festival in Ferndale. In two decades, the city of 22,000 has gone from being a struggling, working-class town to a vibrant center for metropolitan Detroit's gay community. "I can't stop quivering," said 41-year-old Melvin Rodgers Berta, clutching the ringed hand of his partner of three years. "It's just like the day we met," added Leroy Berta, 46. Rev. Mark Bidwell, pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church, joined Porter in performing the marriage ceremonies. However, no marriage licenses were issued because only the county can issue them.

Judge rules against N.M. clerk who wanted to marry gays again

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — State District Judge Louis McDonald said Wednesday that the Sandoval County clerk still is temporarily prohibited from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Attorney Paul Livingston contended that the temporary restraining order against his client, clerk Victoria Dunlap, should no longer be in effect. Dunlap issued 66 licenses to same-sex couples on Feb. 20. She stopped when state Attorney General Patricia Madrid issued a letter saying the clerk's actions were illegal. Dunlap tried again in March, but the county and Madrid's office were hit with a temporary restraining order. Dunlap, who lost her election to a seat on the county commission, announced last week that she intended to begin marry gay couples again because the temporary restraining order could not remain in effect forever.

Coors disavows former chairman's position against gay marriage

DENVER (AP) — Coors Brewing Co. distanced itself last week from its former chairman, saying his political support for a constitutional ban on gay marriage does not reflect the company's position. Republican Senate candidate Peter Coors said during a primary debate two weeks ago that he agreed with the Federal Marriage Amendment proposed by two Colorado Republicans, Sen. Wayne Allard and Rep. Marilyn Musgrave. On June 3, Coors Brewing issued a statement making it clear that Peter Coors' views are his own. "We do not support discrimination against the gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender community, via legislation or otherwise," company CEO Leo Kiely said in a statement. Observers have said Coors needed the votes of party conservatives at last weekend's state party convention, and note that his primary opponent is conservative former congressman Bob Schaffer, an outspoken opponent of gay marriage.

From staff and wire reports

atlanta news

Spiritual conference targets those 'wounded' by churches

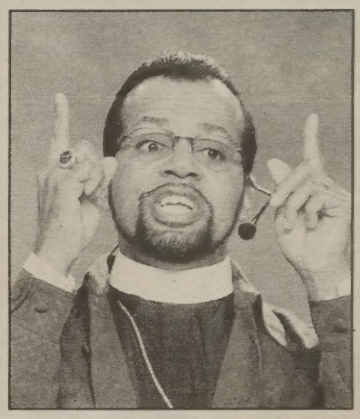
Five-day event filled with gay-inclusive messages, organizers say

By RYAN LEE

Fellowship 2000 — a consortium of clergy and churches that reaches out to groups traditionally marginalized by mainstream Christianity — is bringing its message of the "radically inclusive love of Jesus Christ" to Atlanta for a five-day conference beginning June 16.

More than 500 people from the U.S. and as far away as Hong Kong attended last year's Fellowship 2000 conference in Oakland, Calif. Organizers said they expect even higher attendance for this year's event, according to Rev. Kendal Brown, a member of the Fellowship 2000 administrative board.

"It is our aim to provide refuge for persons who have been wounded by oppressive theologies and to provide a place of nurturing and training for those who feel called to this shared ministry of bringing a message of hope to people on the margins," Brown said. "God has given to us the special task of being bridge-builders between the mainstream church and persons on the margins."



Bishop **Carlton Pearson**, an Oklahoma pastor and popular gospel recording artist, is scheduled to speak and perform at the Fellowship 2000 conference in Atlanta next week. Pearson has been criticized for his gay-inclusive sermons. (Photo by AP)

Organizers hope to attract gay and bisexual attendees — sometimes referred to same-gender loving people among blacks — as well as people living with HIV, substance abusers, sex industry workers and people recently incarcerated.

"For me personally, one of the most mind-boggling aspects of Fellowship 2000 is that it brings together persons from every background imaginable — same-gender loving, straight, transgender, Protestant, Catholic, persons in recovery, persons desiring recovery, sex-industry workers — all under the banner of inclusivity," Brown said.

But the conference is not equating gay participants with substance abusers, nor do organizers seek to lead them away from their same-sex orientation, according to Herndon Davis, the author of "Black, Gay & Christian" and a participant in the conference.

"The groups are similar in that they have been preached against instead of the church reaching out to them," Davis said. "This conference is about affirmation."

Davis expects many attendees to be those who already attend gay-friendly congregations, but he hopes that members of other churches attend as well, he said.

"We're trying to reach out to those who are not being affirmed and who are still struggling with their sexual identity," Davis said.

The conference, co-sponsored by Tabernacle Baptist Church and Victory United Church of Christ in metro Atlanta, costs $55 to attend. Organizers plan to waive the fee for those who can't afford it, Brown said.

The event features a variety of workshops, including "Surviving Church Burn" and "The Welcoming Church." All the sessions will incorporate gay issues, Brown said. Nightly worship services open to the public are also scheduled.

The conference is headlined by Bishop Carlton Pearson, a pastor from Oklahoma and a popular gospel recording artist. Pearson leads a workshop June 18 entitled "Hands Across the Water ... HIV/AIDS." He also performs June 16 at Tabernacle Baptist Church.

Pearson has been criticized for his gay-inclusive teachings. The Joint College of African-American Pentecostal Bishops Conference declared Pearson a heretic in March.

Pearson dismissed his critics, calling them "a vicious, mean, ignorant group of so-called followers of Christ." They serve as "a wake-up call to how narrow-minded the general evangelical community has been," he added.

"Homosexuals in the church is nothing new," Pearson said. "They're not going anywhere, and we need to have dialogue about how we're going to accept and accommodate this growing segment of our church."

Ryan Lee can be reached at rlee@sovo.com.

MORE INFO

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www.fellowship2000.com

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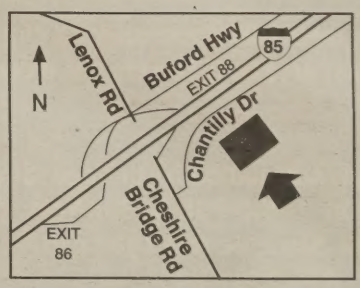

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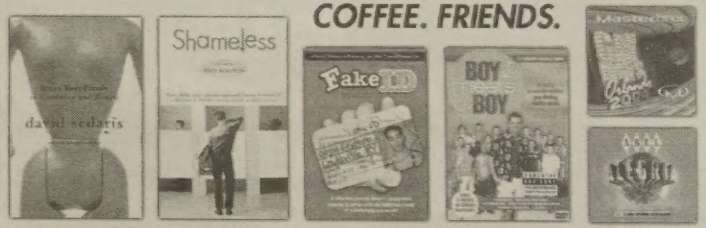

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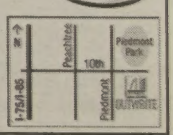

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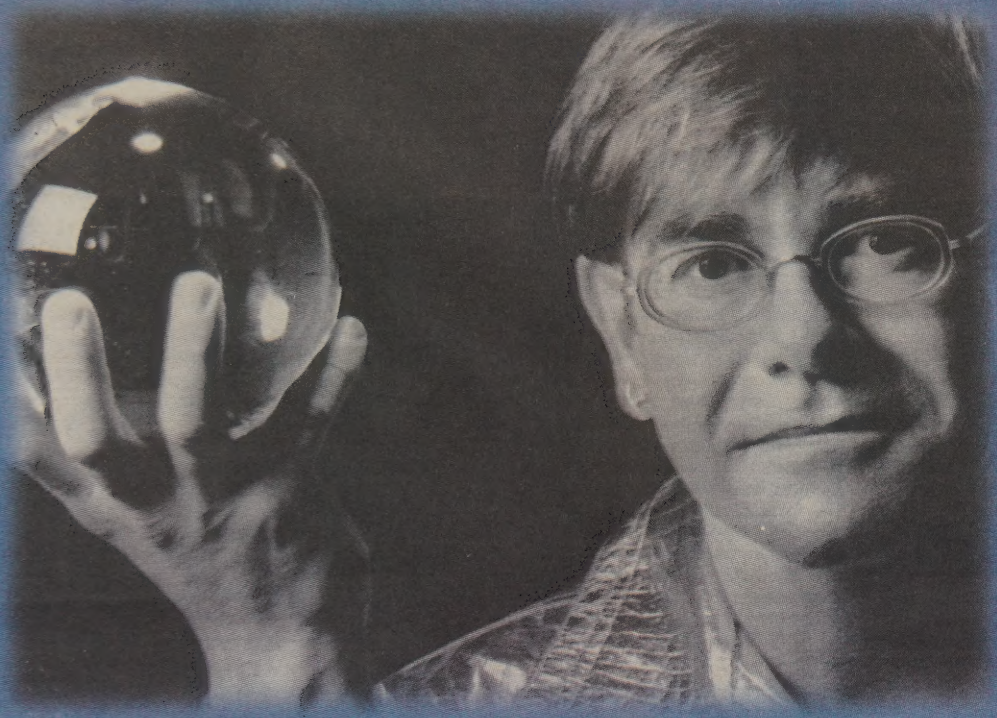

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national news

Reagan's death renews debate over AIDS response

Activists have mixed views on former president's impact on gays, HIV

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON — As the nation mourned the death of President Ronald Reagan, gay and AIDS activists this week renewed debate over whether the 40th president could have saved countless lives of gay and non-gay Americans had he responded differently to the AIDS epidemic.

Reagan's death on June 5 at age 93 of Alzheimer's disease came on the 21st anniversary of the U.S. Center for Disease Control & Prevention's first published report of gay men contracting a rare form of pneumonia in Los Angeles — the first identified cases of an illness that would later be named AIDS.

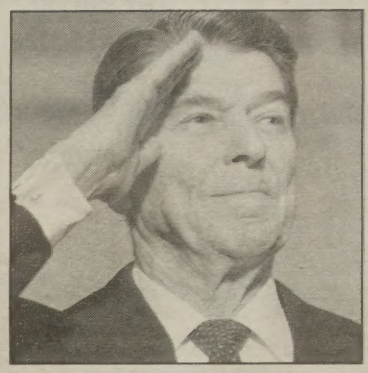
Gay critics — including New York playwright and AIDS activist Larry Kramer — recalled the horrifying early years of the epidemic, when friends and loved ones in New York and San Francisco started dying from Pneumocystis carini pneumonia and Kaposi's Sarcoma, ailments that were linked to an impaired immune system.

Reagan's supporters have called such criticism unfair, saying the Reagan administration sought to grapple with a puzzling new disease as scientists and public health officials scrambled to learn how best to respond. Although they acknowledge that more money could have been allocated to fight the epidemic in the early years, Reagan supporters note that billions of dollars in federal funds were spent on AIDS during Reagan's eight years in office.

Critics say much of those funds were initiated by both Democratic and Republican members of Congress, which "force-fed" the Reagan administration by imposing more AIDS funds in the annual appropriations bill for the Department of Health & Human Services.

On the gay rights front, officials with the gay group Log Cabin Republicans joined other gay leaders in praising Reagan for taking a lead role in opposing a 1978 anti-gay ballot measure in California known as the Briggs Initiative, which sought to prevent gays from teaching in public schools.

Reagan, who served as governor of California from 1967 to 1975, was credited with helping to defeat the initiative at a time when he was preparing his 1980 run for the presidency. Political pundits noted that Reagan ignored advice by some conservative supporters to stay away from the controversial "homosexual" issue, which they warned would alienate conservative Christian voters.



Many AIDS activists say President Reagan's response to the AIDS epidemic was slow and inadequate.

"Whatever it is, homosexuality is not a contagious disease like the measles," Reagan wrote in a September 1978 statement opposing the initiative. "Prevailing scientific opinion is that an individual's sexuality is determined at a very early age and that a child's teachers do not really influence this."

Patrick Guerriero, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans, and Cheryl Jacques, president of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay political group, issued statements praising Reagan for taking a stand against the Briggs Initiative, which was named after an anti-gay California legislator.

"Like all Americans, the Human Rights Campaign is saddened by the passing of President Ronald Reagan," Jacques said.

Guerriero said Log Cabin members were indebted to Reagan's efforts to defeat the Briggs Initiative, especially since the initiative prompted California gay Republicans to found the Log Cabin group as a means of fighting the anti-gay ballot measure.

"He will go down in history as one of our greatest presidents," Guerriero said in a June 7 statement.

Reagan slow to act on AIDS

But Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, raised concerns about Reagan's handling of AIDS and gay issues during his presidency. Foreman released his views in the form of an emotional letter to Steven Powsner, a close friend who of died of AIDS in 1995. [Please see column on page 30].

Foreman states in his letter that he feels for Reagan's family and friends, who are grieving over the loss of a loved one. But he said he is also "not able to set aside the shaking anger I feel over Reagan's non-response to the AIDS epidemic or for the continuing anti-gay legacy of his administration."

Foreman's comments reflect the views of a large number of gay and AIDS

Please see REAGAN on Page 21

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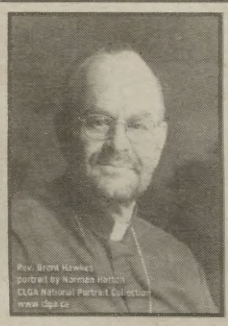
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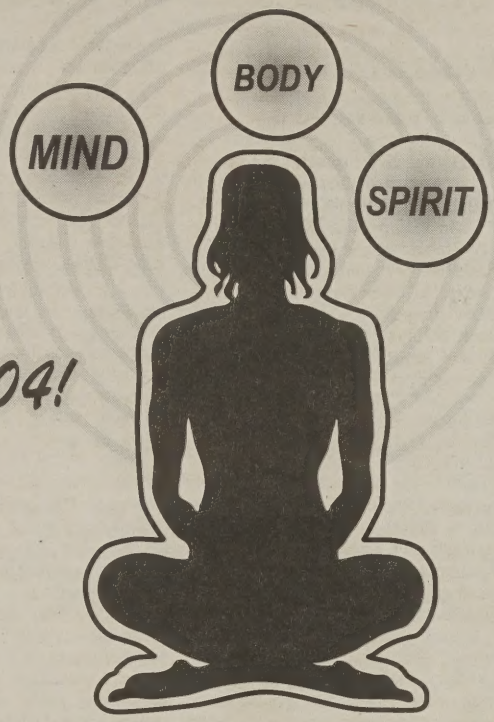

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police beat

Scam artist copies Grisham plot, gets 33 months in prison

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — A Connecticut man was sentenced to 33 months in federal prison last week for orchestrating an Internet scam remarkably similar to one outlined in a best-selling legal thriller. Steven Smith, 43, of Bristol, posted Internet advertisements posing as a 21-year-old homosexual man, rejected by his parents and looking for guidance from older men. When people responded to his advertisements, Smith told them he was incarcerated and needed money to get out of jail. In John Grisham's 2000 book "The Brethren," a trio of imprisoned judges post personal advertisements in gay magazines, posing as a confused young homosexual man. "The Brethren" was a No. 1 New York Times best seller. At least 28 victims from 18 states, and at least one Canadian resident, mailed Smith money, prosecutors said. Smith, using the screen name of "Stevenyounger," received $64,585 in contributions.

A Connecticut man was sentenced to prison last week for carrying out an Internet scam — involving posing as a gay man — that closely resembled the plot in the best-seller 'The Brethren' by author **John Grisham**. (Photo by Jim Cooper/AP)

Case of slain transgendered teen goes to jury in Calif.

HAYWARD, Calif. (AP) — A jury began deliberating last week in the murder case against three young men charged with beating and strangling a teenager after discovering she was biologically male. Attorneys for two of the defendants argued that the killing of 17-year-old Gwen Araujo — who was born male but passed as a woman — was manslaughter, not murder, because the men acted out of panic and shock over Araujo's sexual deception. But prosecutor Chris Lamiero rejected that theory as he made his final argument to jurors. "The provocation did not flow from [Gwen] Araujo. The provocation flowed from within them," Lamiero said. As jurors deliberate the case, community advocates are anxiously watching. "It is huge," said Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "We are all on pins and needles waiting to see what the jury does and it will be devastating if they don't respect Gwen's humanity and see through the offensive and irrational arguments the defense attorneys have made."

Ohio judge orders lower court to reconsider transsexual's suit

CINCINNATI (AP) — A federal appeals court ordered a lower court last week to reconsider a lawsuit by a transsexual firefighter who said the city of Salem violated her rights by suspending her after she disclosed she was changing her gender to become a woman. The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a federal judge in Youngstown erred last year by dismissing the claims of the fire lieutenant, known as Jimmie L. Smith. The appeals judges said Smith had presented evidence that supported her claims of gender discrimination and civil rights violations. The appeals court reinstated the lawsuit and sent it back to U.S. District Judge Peter Economus. Smith's lawyer, Randi Barnabee, said she was pleased with the ruling. She said the case isn't likely to go to trial before next year. Smith said city officials formed a plan to fire her after she told a supervisor she had been diagnosed with gender identity disorder and planned to make a complete physical transformation.

Colo. woman challenges order barring 'homophobic' comments

DENVER (AP) — A court order barring a woman from exposing her adoptive daughter to anything homophobic after the woman left a lesbian relationship should be overturned because it is so vague it could require her to black out portions of the Bible, her lawyer argued in court last week. The order unfairly limits Cheryl Clark's parental right to raise her 9-year-old daughter as a Christian, attorney James Rouse told a three-judge panel of the state appeals court. The judges did not immediately issue a ruling. Clark, a psychiatrist, raised her daughter with her former partner Elsey McLeod, a psychologist, until converting to Christianity and leaving the relationship 2 1/2 years later. After the couple split up, Denver District Judge John W. Coughlin ordered Clark to share custody with McLeod because the girl saw both women as parents. He gave Clark sole responsibility for the girl's upbringing, including religious instruction, but told her not to expose her to anything "homophobic."

Gay rumor aside, Ark. case closed in Scotsman's mysterious death

LITTLE ROCK (AP) — Little Rock police await only a toxicology report in the mysterious death of a Scotsman who died after picking up some poisonous snakes at the city airport. But the toxicology report isn't expected to show anything about venom the man may have had in his system, a police spokesperson said last week, and the case is essentially closed. "We're basically done with it," said Little Rock Police Department spokesperson Terry Hastings. "This is not a criminal investigation; it was ruled an accidental death and it's handled the same way as someone falling off the roof of a house." Garrick Wales, a 48-year-old Scotsman, was found dead in a rented Chevy Blazer near Little Rock's airport May 13. Days later police found a box of four venomous snakes that they believe belonged to Wales. The case has been peppered with hearsay and sensational reports, Hastings said. He said false reports include a relationship Wales supposedly had with Joanna Jet, a transsexual porn star in Europe.

From staff and wire reports

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international news

French mayor marries gay couple despite condemnation

French officials condemned the wedding ceremony of gay couple **Bertrand Charpentier** (left) and **Stephane Chapin** (right), at which Mayor **Noel Mamere** (center) of Begles, France, officiated on Saturday. (Photo by Derrick Ceyrac/AP)

BEGLES, France (AP) — A gay couple said "oui" for the first time in France, days after the prime minister warned that the gay union would be legally "null and void." Stephane Chapin, dressed in a white suit and dabbing tears of joy from his eyes, and Bertrand Charpentier, in deep gray pinstripes, embraced, kissed and smiled broadly Saturday after the brief civil ceremony in the Begles town hall in southwestern France, near Bordeaux. The justice minister quickly said that the Bordeaux court would be petitioned to declare the marriage null, while the interior minister said the mayor who performed the ceremony — a Green Party politician known as a provocateur — would be sanctioned. Begles Mayor Noel Mamere defiantly wore the blue, white and red ribbons — France's national colors — that are conferred on mayors as representatives of the state and used during all official functions. In France, mayors perform civil marriages, which are required by law. "I regret nothing," he said later.

Jerusalem gay Pride parade goes on, despite protests, mayor's disapproval

JERUSALEM — Thousands participated in the June 3 gay Pride parade in Jerusalem, faced with protesters and the condemnation of the city's mayor, Ha'aretz reported. Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski, in a radio interview on June 4, decried the downtown parade, according to media reports. "To carry out an insulting parade — I don't call that pride," Lupolianski told reporters. "In a place like Jerusalem, this is an ugly phenomenon, which need not happen." He said the event was inappropriate in a "sacred city," Ha'aretz reported. "This parade is not only ugly, it's also a provocation," Lupolianski said in the interview. "It's not appropriate for the city, and it offends the sensitivities of its residents. Even people distant from Jerusalem must grasp that this is a sacred city for the Jewish people, and the world as a whole. This isn't Paris, and it isn't London. I'm not talking about what a person does privately in his home — a parade in public is something else ... If somebody has some sort of deviant trait, it doesn't mean that he has to raise its banner in public."

Scottish lawmakers approve civil unions to match England

EDINBURGH — The Scottish Parliament last week voted to adopt Civil Partnerships when the measure is approved in Westminster as expected later this year, Gay.com UK reported. The move gives same-sex couples in Scotland access to the same ceremonies as those in England and Wales, according to media reports. Some Scottish leaders, however, posed the question of whether or not the country should adopt its own laws on the issue, news outlets reported. In September, the Scottish Executive suggested that Scotland adopt English and Welsh law on the topic, when it is passed, while Green party members said the country should adopt is own measures. Green MSP Patrick Harvie told the media, "The expertise in Scottish law now resides here. It would have been better if we'd done it here." But Harvie told reporters that the motion approved last week was better than no civil union option at all for Scottish gays.

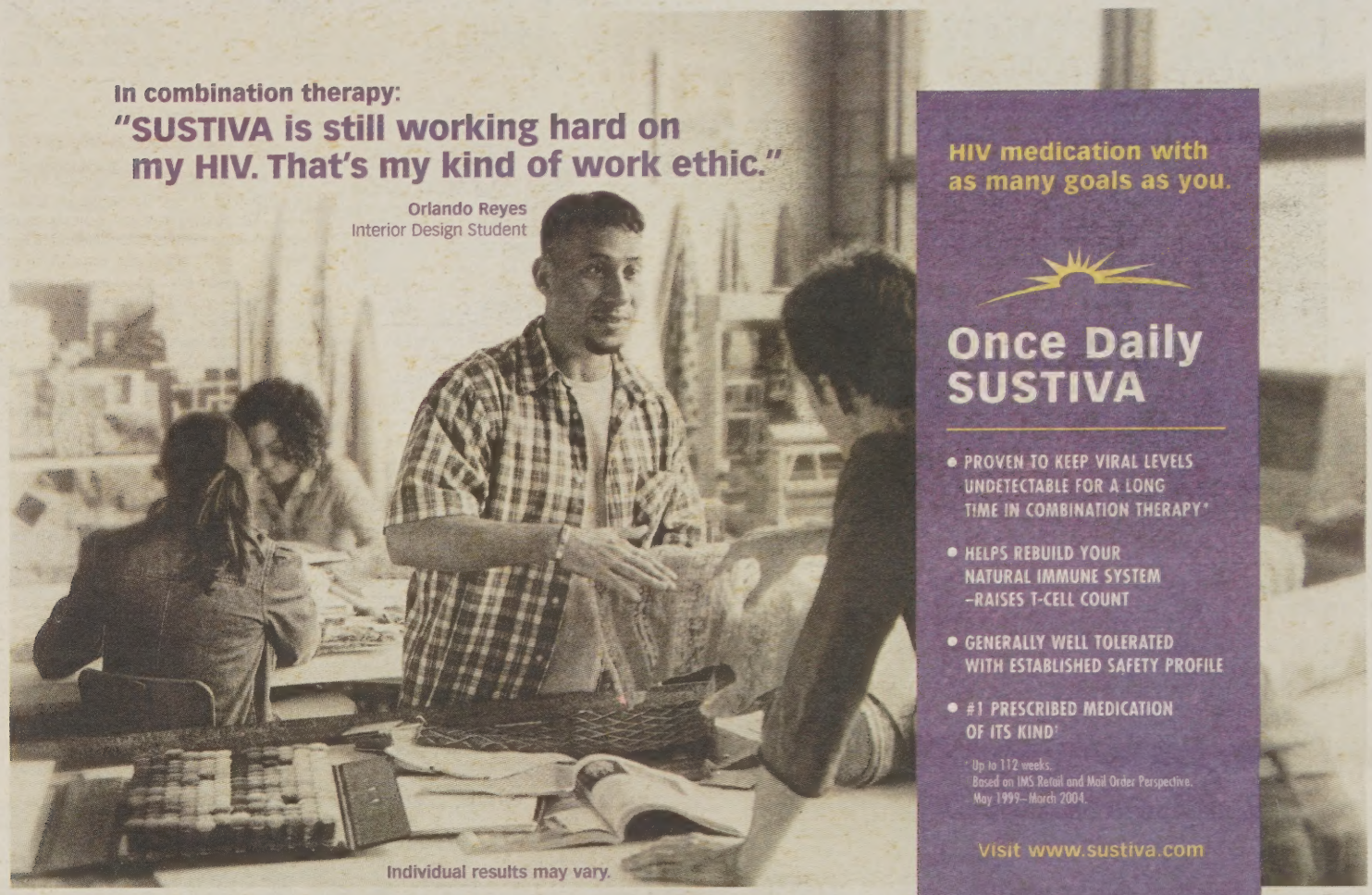
Report: Thailand officials to ask TV to cut back on gay portrayals

BANGKOK, Thailand — The Nation newspaper reported Saturday that Thailand's Culture Ministry plans to ask television stations to reduce on-screen portrayals of gay behavior, calling it "sexually deviant," the Canadian Press reported. The Nation report quoted Kla Somtrakul, the No. 2 politician in the ministry, as saying programs that show obvious gay behavior could cross the line of decency if not reined in, the Press reported. Ministry officials plan to send a letter this week asking that TV stations refrain from airing "sexually deviant" gay messages, although the final decision is left to the stations, the Nation reported. "Many parents told me that they are worried that their children would have sexually deviant behavior after viewing such behaviors on TV," Somtrakul was quoted as saying to the Nation, the Press reported. Thailand is a conservative Buddhist society, but gays and cross-dressing are widely tolerated, and transvestite cabaret shows are popular for tourists, according to the Press.

German government proposes rights for same-sex couples

BERLIN — According to German Justice Minister Brigitte Zypries, the country's government will offer legislation to give men and women in same-sex unions the same civil rights as married heterosexuals, the Berliner Zeitung newspaper reported Saturday, according to Deutsche Welle. Zypries said the proposal will enter the lower house of parliament before the summer recess and would not need consent from the opposition-controlled upper house, which would be expected to reject it, media outlets reported. "Gay and lesbian couples are a social reality in Germany," the paper quoted Zypries as saying, according to Deutsche Welle. Zypries told the press that the governing coalition of Social Democrats and Greens agreed that gays and lesbians should have spousal rights, including the ability to refuse to testify in trials against their partners and to claim alimony in the event of a breakup, news outlets reported.

From staff and wire reports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SUSTIVA does not cure HIV or help prevent passing HIV to others.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:
SUSTIVA should not be taken with Hismanal® (astemizole), Propulsid® (cisapride), Versed® (midazolam), Halcion® (triazolam), or ergot derivatives. Tell your doctor about any medications or herbal products (particularly St. John's wort) that you are taking.

Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams. These feelings tend to go away after taking the medication for a few weeks. A small number of patients have reported severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. There have been a few reports of suicide but it is not known if SUSTIVA (efavirenz) was the cause. Rash is another common side effect. Rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. If you or your child develop a rash, call your doctor right away.

Women should not become pregnant or breastfeed while taking SUSTIVA.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.

You should take SUSTIVA on an empty stomach, preferably at bedtime. Taking SUSTIVA with food increases the amount of medicine in your body, which may increase the frequency of side effects. Taking SUSTIVA at bedtime may make some side effects less bothersome.

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Please see important information about SUSTIVA on the next page.

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PATIENT INFORMATION

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ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with SUSTIVA.

Please also read the section **"MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH SUSTIVA."**

Read this information before you start taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz). Read it again each time you refill your prescription, in case there is any new information. This leaflet provides a summary about SUSTIVA and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information is not meant to take the place of talking with your doctor.

What is SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA is a medicine used in combination with other medicines to help treat infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the virus that causes AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). SUSTIVA is a type of anti-HIV drug called a "non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor" (NNRTI).

SUSTIVA works by lowering the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load). SUSTIVA must be taken with other anti-HIV medicines. When taken with other anti-HIV medicines, SUSTIVA has been shown to reduce viral load and increase the number of CD4 cells, a type of immune cell in blood. SUSTIVA may not have these effects in every patient.

SUSTIVA does not cure HIV or AIDS. People taking SUSTIVA may still develop other infections and complications. Therefore, it is very important that you stay under the care of your doctor.

SUSTIVA has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HIV to others. Therefore, continue to practice safe sex, and do not use or share dirty needles.

What are the possible side effects of SUSTIVA?

Serious psychiatric problems. A small number of patients experience severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior while taking SUSTIVA. Some patients have thoughts of suicide and a few have actually committed suicide. These problems tend to occur more often in patients who have had mental illness. Contact your doctor right away if you think you are having these psychiatric symptoms, so your doctor can decide if you should continue to take SUSTIVA.

Common side effects. Many patients have dizziness, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, trouble concentrating, and/or unusual dreams during treatment with SUSTIVA. These side effects may be reduced if you take SUSTIVA at bedtime on an empty stomach. They also tend to go away after you have taken the medicine for a few weeks. If you have these common side effects, such as dizziness, it does not mean that you will also have serious psychiatric problems, such as severe depression, strange thoughts, or angry behavior. Tell your doctor right away if any of these side effects continue or if they bother you. It is possible that these symptoms may be more severe if SUSTIVA is used with alcohol or mood altering (street) drugs.

If you are dizzy, have trouble concentrating, or are drowsy, avoid activities that may be dangerous, such as driving or operating machinery.

Rash is common. Rashes usually go away without any change in treatment. In a small number of patients, rash may be serious. If you develop a rash, call your doctor right away. **Rash may be a serious problem in some children.** Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA.

Other common side effects include tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Changes in body fat. Changes in body fat develop in some patients taking anti-HIV medicine. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), in the breasts, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these fat changes are not known.

Tell your doctor or healthcare provider if you notice any side effects while taking SUSTIVA.

Contact your doctor before stopping SUSTIVA because of side effects or for any other reason.

This is not a complete list of side effects possible with SUSTIVA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a more complete list of side effects of SUSTIVA and all the medicines you will take.

How should I take SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?

General Information

- You should take SUSTIVA on an empty stomach, preferably at bedtime.
- Swallow SUSTIVA with water.
- Taking SUSTIVA with food increases the amount of medicine in your body, which may increase the frequency of side effects.
- Taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz) at bedtime may make some side effects less bothersome.
- SUSTIVA must be taken in combination with other anti-HIV medicines. If you take only SUSTIVA, the medicine may stop working.
- Do not miss a dose of SUSTIVA. If you forget to take SUSTIVA, take the missed dose right away, unless it is almost time for your next dose. Do not double the next dose. Carry on with your regular dosing schedule. If you need help in planning the best times to take your medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Take the exact amount of SUSTIVA your doctor prescribes. Never change the dose on your own. Do not stop this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop.
- If you believe you took more than the prescribed amount of SUSTIVA, contact your local Poison Control Center or emergency room right away.
- Tell your doctor if you start any new medicine or change how you take old ones. Your doses may need adjustment.
- When your SUSTIVA supply starts to run low, get more from your doctor or pharmacy. This is very important because the amount of virus in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time. The virus may develop resistance to SUSTIVA and become harder to treat.
- Your doctor may want to do blood tests to check for certain side effects while you take SUSTIVA.

Capsules

- The dose of SUSTIVA capsules for adults is 600 mg (three 200-mg capsules, taken together) once a day by mouth. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower (see **Can children take SUSTIVA?**).

Tablets

- The dose of SUSTIVA tablets for adults is 600 mg (one tablet) once a day by mouth.

Can children take SUSTIVA?

Yes, children who are able to swallow capsules can take SUSTIVA. Rash may be a serious problem in some children. Tell your child's doctor right away if you notice rash or any other side effects while your child is taking SUSTIVA. The dose of SUSTIVA for children may be lower than the dose for adults. Capsules containing lower doses of SUSTIVA are available. Your child's doctor will determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

Who should not take SUSTIVA?

Do not take SUSTIVA if you are allergic to the active ingredient, efavirenz, or to any of the inactive ingredients. Your doctor and pharmacist have a list of the inactive ingredients.

What should I avoid while taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz)?

- **Women taking SUSTIVA should not become pregnant.** Serious birth defects have been seen in animals treated with SUSTIVA. It is not known whether this could happen in humans. **Tell your doctor right away if you are pregnant.** Also talk with your doctor if you want to become pregnant.
- Women should not rely only on hormone-based birth control, such as pills, injections, or implants, because SUSTIVA may make these contraceptives ineffective. Women must use a reliable form of barrier contraception, such as a condom or diaphragm, even if they also use other methods of birth control.
- **Do not breast-feed if you are taking SUSTIVA.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that mothers with HIV not breast-feed because they can pass the HIV through their milk to the baby. Also, SUSTIVA may pass through breast milk and cause serious harm to the baby. Talk with your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You may need to stop breast-feeding or use a different medicine.
- Taking SUSTIVA with alcohol or other medicines causing similar side effects as SUSTIVA, such as drowsiness, may increase those side effects.
- Do not take any other medicines without checking with your doctor. These medicines include prescription and non-prescription medicines and herbal products, especially St. John's wort.

Before using SUSTIVA, tell your doctor if you

- **have problems with your liver or have hepatitis.** Your doctor may want to do tests to check your liver while you take SUSTIVA.
- **have ever had mental illness or are using drugs or alcohol.**
- **have ever had seizures or are taking medicine for seizures** [for example, Dilantin® (phenytoin), Tegretol® (carbamazepine), or phenobarbital]. Your doctor may want to check drug levels in your blood from time to time.

What important information should I know about taking other medicines with SUSTIVA?

SUSTIVA may change the effect of other medicines, including ones for HIV, and cause serious side effects. Your doctor may change your other medicines or change their doses. Other medicines, including herbal products, may affect SUSTIVA. For this reason, **it is very important to:**

- let all your doctors and pharmacists know that you take SUSTIVA.
- tell your doctors and pharmacists about all medicines you take. This includes those you buy over-the-counter and herbal or natural remedies.

Bring all your prescription and nonprescription medicines as well as any herbal remedies that you are taking when you see a doctor, or make a list of their names, how much you take, and how often you take them. This will give your doctor a complete picture of the medicines you use. Then he or she can decide the best approach for your situation.

Taking SUSTIVA (efavirenz) with St. John's wort *(Hypericum perforatum)*, an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort is not recommended. Talk with your doctor if you are taking or are planning to take St. John's wort. Taking St. John's wort may decrease SUSTIVA levels and lead to increased viral load and possible resistance to SUSTIVA or cross-resistance to other anti-HIV drugs.

MEDICINES YOU SHOULD NOT TAKE WITH SUSTIVA

The following medicines may cause serious and life-threatening side effects when taken with SUSTIVA. You should not take any of these medicines while taking SUSTIVA:

- Hismanal® (astemizole)
- Propulsid® (cisapride)
- Versed® (midazolam)
- Halcion® (triazolam)
- Ergot medications (for example, Wigraine® and Cafergot®)

The following medicines may need to be replaced with another medicine when taken with SUSTIVA (efavirenz):

- Fortovase®, Invirase® (saquinavir)
- Biaxin® (clarithromycin)

The following medicines may need to have their dose changed when taken with SUSTIVA:

- Crixivan® (indinavir)
- Kaletra® (lopinavir/ritonavir)
- Methadone
- Mycobutin® (rifabutin)
- Zoloft® (sertraline)

These are not all the medicines that may cause problems if you take SUSTIVA. Be sure to tell your doctor about all medicines that you take.

General advice about SUSTIVA:

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use SUSTIVA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give SUSTIVA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

Keep SUSTIVA at room temperature (77°F) in the bottle given to you by your pharmacist. The temperature can range from 59° to 86°F.

Keep SUSTIVA out of the reach of children.

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about SUSTIVA. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your pharmacist or doctor for the full prescribing information about SUSTIVA, or you can visit the SUSTIVA website at http://www.sustiva.com or call 1-800-426-7644.

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national news

Reagan first said 'AIDS' in public in 1985

REAGAN, continued from Page 15

activists who say Reagan's passing prompted them to revisit the early AIDS years, unleashing memories that have taken the form of an emotional roller coaster.

Much of the discussion has centered on when Reagan first spoke publicly on AIDS. Critics for years have denounced the former president for not making a major public speech on the subject until March 1987, when he appeared at a Washington, D.C., ceremony held in conjunction with the Third International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C.

Supporters point to White House records showing that Reagan first spoke publicly on AIDS at a September 1985 White House news conference. Reagan's comments came in response to a reporter's question about whether he would support a massive government research program on AIDS similar to the U.S. space program's effort to land a man on the moon.

"It's been one of the top priorities with us," Reagan said. "And over the last four years, and including what we have in the budget for '86, it will amount to over a half a billion dollars that we have provided for research on AIDS."

Reagan issued a written statement to Congress in February 1986, the same week he delivered his State of the Union address, in which he discussed AIDS among other domestic issues.

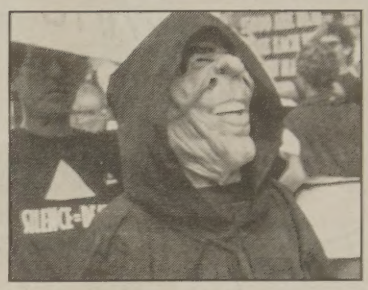
Edmund Morris, author of the 1999 authorized Reagan biography, "Dutch," stated in the book that Reagan once said this about AIDS: "Maybe the Lord brought down this plague" because "illicit sex is against the Ten Commandments."

That quote was challenged by at least one book reviewer, who said Morris admitted to making up Reagan quotes.

In his authoritative book, "And The Band Played On," the late gay journalist Randy Shilts has been credited with persuading many government scientists and officials to speak frankly about how the Reagan administration handled AIDS in the early years.

Shilts reported that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, which detected the first cases of AIDS before the disease was named, regularly struggled for more funds to conduct crucial research to track the disease. Shilts said other government scientists and public health officials at the National Institutes of Health spurned the CDC.

Several years later, according to Shilts, U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, an evangelical Christian whom gay activists viewed as being anti-gay, startled conservative leaders in and out of government when he called for a massive sex education campaign and the promotion of condom use as part of an AIDS prevention campaign.



An AIDS protester wears a Ronald Reagan mask dressed as the Grim Reaper during a 1987 protest over the lack of research funds devoted to the illness. (Photo by Doug Hinckle)

Ignoring gay civil rights?

On the gay rights front, gay leaders have criticized Reagan for ignoring gay civil rights issues during his two terms as president and for appointing a cadre of anti-gay, religious-right advocates to key administration jobs.

Among them were Patrick Buchanan, the anti-gay commentator and newspaper columnist who served in the White House communications office; William Bennett, who served as secretary of education; and Gary Bauer, who served as White House domestic policy adviser.

Reagan also drew strong objections from gay activists and African-American civil rights leaders when he named an anti-gay black minister, Sam Hart, as chair of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Hart led efforts to oppose a gay civil rights bill in Philadelphia, his hometown.

Still, Reagan's own views on gays are undetermined.

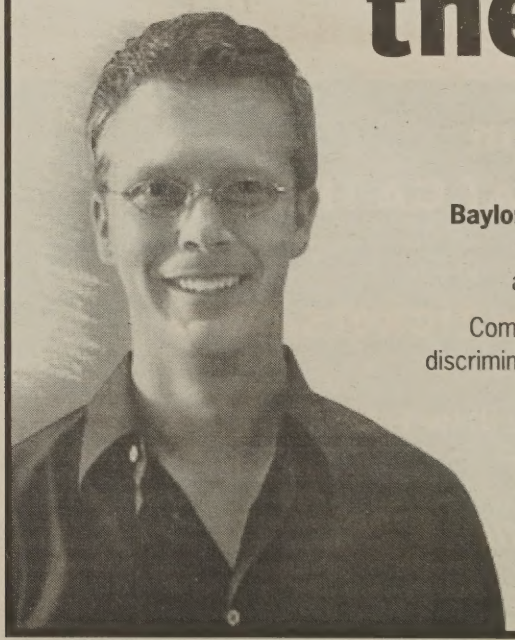
While social conservatives within the administration pushed hard for advancing the religious-right agenda, Reagan himself never spoke out against gays in a speech or public document and never spoke in favor of the anti-gay positions of the religious right.

Veteran Washington gay activist Frank Kameny, who is among the nation's founding gay civil rights leaders, said Reagan appeared to take a posture of benign neglect when it came to gay issues.

"We didn't gain much on the gay front," Kameny said. "Aside from the AIDS issue, there were major cultural changes going on, most in our favor. The administration did not push those, but they were for the most part a non-player in those changes. I didn't see the White House doing anything, one way or the other."

Similar to other Republican administrations, a number of closeted gays worked in key White House and administration positions during the Reagan years, and in some cases they did not conceal their sexual orientation on the job, according to gay Republicans.

Breaking all the rules



Matt Bass

Baylor University stripped graduate theology student **Matt Bass** of his financial aid after confronting him about his sexuality.

Come to our June meeting to hear his tale of discrimination and what the future holds for Matt.

This meeting made possible by the ACLU of Georgia, the Atlanta Pride Committee and AEN.

AEN

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 404.724.9008

AEN.ORG

Thursday June 17

Sheraton Midtown Hotel at Colony Square

Corner of 14th and Peachtree St

Networking begins: 5:45 p.m.
Program begins: 7:00 p.m.

Guests: $20
Members: $10
Students: Free

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Last year we brought you seven of Atlanta's best cabaret divas in "Babes in Boyland."
Now it's time for the men!
Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus and Evian kick off Pride Week in Atlanta as they present:
Reel Men

An original multi-media variety production featuring
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This program is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations of the Georgia Assembly.
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Come celebrate Pride Weekend, June 25-27 in Atlanta.

What better place than the "city too busy to hate" to proclaim that "Equality = Justice" this pivotal election year?

This year is your year. Stroll through the South's largest Pride celebration in lush Piedmont Park. Mingle with friends old and new among the eclectic and energetic cross-section of our community. Venture into gay-friendly neighborhoods and explore Atlanta's delectable food scene, world-class shopping and legendary nightlife.

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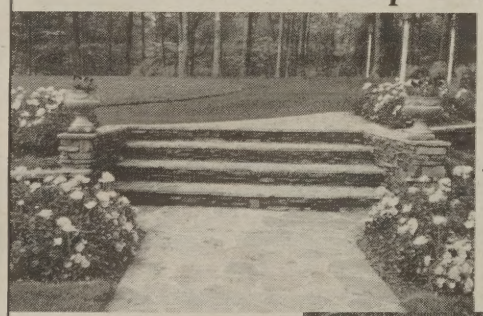

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Kecia Cunnigham, a lesbian and Decatur city commissioner, delivered the keynote speech last weekend as PFLAG awarded $3,000 to four college students. (Photos by Sher Pruitt)

Scholarly pursuits

PFLAG Atlanta awards 2004 scholarships from undergrads to doctoral students, veterinarians to social workers

By HEATH RENFROE

FOR THE TENTH YEAR, PARENTS & Friends of Lesbians & Gays of Atlanta awarded scholarships June 6 to self-identified gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered students.

"We are awarding people who are active in a community that is not always recognized or appreciated," said Maggie Cowen, scholarship program director for the group.

Over the course of the scholarship's existence, more than 70 awards and $120,000 have been awarded.

"It's nice to have some positive reinforcement and acknowledgement that we are human beings and are active and that we do work for the betterment of the community," Cowen said.

This year, four students each received a $3,000 scholarship after being evaluated by a panel of judges based on work as activists, academic achievement, financial need and potential to achieve goals.

"I'm really excited," said Craig Washington, one of this year's recipients. "It's great to be affirmed by an institution like PFLAG. It makes an incredible statement about love and acceptance to the world. It's an honor."

Along with Washington, Michael Crachiolo, Anneliese Singh and Angela Taylor received the awards.

Besides self-identifying as gay, applicants must be current Georgia residents or attend a school in state, demonstrate a history of activism in their communities and be in good academic standing.

Some 21 applicants vied for the scholarships this year. A panel of judges not directly linked to PFLAG evaluated the applicants. The age, academic career and personal involvement in gay issues of each student were taken into account by the judges. But the chosen students were selected primarily based on their role as activists, according to Cowen.

"These people have a broad range of activism, it wasn't just gay involvement," she said.

THE JUNE 6 AWARDS CEREMONY WAS held at the First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, with Decatur City Commissioner Kecia Cunningham as keynote speaker and Our Song, a gay and lesbian chorus, providing entertainment.

This year was the first in which the awards ceremony was held at a gay-identified space. Cowen said that the environment added to a "sense of community" during the ceremony.

"The whole thing was just affirming and hopeful," Cowen said. "To be at this very short but very meaningful program and to have these people in front of their parents being rewarded for their activism in this beleaguered community was just very hopeful."

MORE INFO

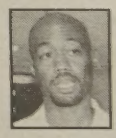
PFLAG Atlanta
P.O. Box 450393
Atlanta, GA 31145
770-662-6475
www.pflagatl.org

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Anneliese Singh
Age: 34
Residence: Atlanta
Hometown: New Orleans
School: Georgia State University
Major: Counseling Psychology
Activism: Founder of local chapter of AGLBIC (Association for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues in Counseling). Currently working on research to examine approaches for counselors and psychological professionals to serve the mental health needs of gay constituents. Member of Asian Pacific Islander Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Network. Volunteer and member of Trikone, an organization for queer South Asians.
Quote: "I'm so very thankful for [PFLAG's] support of queer students of color."

Michael Crachiolo
Age: 20
Residence: New York City
Hometown: Atlanta
School: New York University
Major: Metropolitan Studies & Spanish
Activism: Co-Founder of Henry W. Grady High School's Gay-Straight Alliance. Received the Diversity Award from GHS. Volunteer with Enlight Atlanta. Volunteer Coordinator of AIDS Walk New York. Editor for "QueeRead" newsletter of NYU's Office of LGBT Student Services.

Angela Taylor
Age: 27
Residence: Atlanta
Hometown: Phoenix
School: University of Georgia
Major: Veterinary Medicine
Activism: Founded Sisters of Saffo, the first lesbian social and support group at the University of Arizona. Currently working with Asian Pacific Islander Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Network and Atlanta's International Rescue Center. Co-leader of Drumsista.



Craig Washington
Age: 44
Residence: Atlanta
Hometown: Queens, N.Y.
School: Georgia State University
Major: Social Work
Year in school: Junior
Activism: Currently volunteer in training coordinator at Positive Impact. Former first vice-chair of the Ryan White Planning Council. Former co-chair of Second Sunday, a support group for gay and bisexual men of African descent. Former executive director of Atlanta's Gay & Lesbian Center. Former employee at AID Atlanta. Works with the National Coalition Builder Institute.

notes

The June 17 Atlanta Executive Network meeting features **Matt Bass**, a Baylor University graduate theology student stripped of a scholarship after his sexual orientation became public. Networking at 5:45 p.m. and program at 7 p.m. at Sheraton Midtown Atlanta Hotel at Colony Square, 188 14th Street at Peachtree St. 404-724-9008, www.aen.org

FRIDAY JUNE 11

GRAB YOUR PARTNER: The Hotlanta Squares gay square dancing club welcomes singles and couples to its Pride dance from 7-8 p.m. (advanced level) and 8-10:30 p.m. (mainstream/plus) at First Baptist Church of Decatur, 308 Clairemont Ave., Decatur. 770-329-3146, www.iagsdc.org/hotlanta

SUNDAY JUNE 13

CUISINE FOR A CAUSE: More than 100 hosts across the city hold 'Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?' fund-raiser parties for AID Atlanta at 5 p.m., followed by an 8 p.m. after-party at the Metropolis, 943 Peachtree St. NE. 404-870-7731, www.aidatlanta.org

VOTING'S NO DRAG: Comic drag queen Ruby Redd hosts a voter registration drive at 8 p.m. at Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse, 991 Piedmont Ave. 404-607-0082, www.outwrite-books.com. June 21 is the registration deadline for the July 20 primary elections: 404-656-2871, www.sos.state.ga.us/elections

PIONEERING PASTOR: Rev. Brent Hawkes, senior pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church in Toronto, brought lawsuits to the Canadian Supreme Court challenging the country's same-sex marriage laws. He speaks at 11 a.m. at First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-325-4143, www.firstmcc.com

THURSDAY JUNE 17

INSEMINATION INFORMATION: Gail Panacci and Juaquita Callaway facilitate a 'Donor Insemination: Maybe Baby? Is Donor Insemination For You?' workshop co-sponsored by the Feminist Women's Health Center at 7:30 p.m. at Charis Books & More, 1189 Euclid Ave. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

COMMUNITY CALENDAR, **Page 26** BASKETBALL PHOTOS, **Page 27**

community calendar

SATURDAY JUNE 12
ONGOING EVENTS

ALTLANTA QUEERS. New social and networking group forming for rock, alternative, indie culture, and like-minded GLBT's. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/altlanta_queers

ATLANTA MEN FOR ALL CULTURES. Gay men's social organization holds its monthly pot luck dinner at 7:30 p.m. 404-315-9079, http://atlmenforallcultures.org

ASIAN PACIFIC LESBIAN BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER NETWORK. Women's and trans-women's social organization. 404-795-0680, www.aplbtn.net

FAMILYPRIDE OF THE SOUTH. Support and networking group for gay parents and their children. 770-640-1915, www.familypridesouth.org

KNOW THY NEIGHBOR CLUB. Decatur to Virginia-Highlands area women's dining and socializing group. 404-273-5751.

NORTH ATLANTA OWLS. Older wiser lesbians (50 +) meet for fun and friendship. Locations and activities vary. Mfinatlanta@yahoo.com

ZACCHAEUS SOCIETY. Social and outreach group for gays and straights in Rockdale and Newton counties, monthly covered dish meeting. 5 p.m. 770-520-3700, www.outinthecountry.org

SUNDAY JUNE 13

CHARIS CIRCLE. Lisa Prince, executive director of FamilyPride of the South, conducts an empowerment workshop for youth ages 8-13 who are children of LGBT parents. 6-8 p.m. at Charis Books & More, 189 Euclid Ave. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

PIONEERING PASTOR. Rev. Brent Hawkes, the senior pastor of Toronto, Canada Metropolitan Community Church who brought the lawsuits to the Canadian Supreme Court that challenged the country's same-sex marriage laws, speaks at 11 a.m. at First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-325-4143, www.firstmcc.com

ONGOING EVENTS

ATLANTA FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS. Non-auditioned. 3:45 p.m. rehearsal at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church, 1026 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE. 770-438-5823, www.AFWCChorus.org

BLACK LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP. Coming out support group. 4-6 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 North Candler Road, Decatur. 404-370-0920, www.youthpride.org

COME OUT DANCING. Weekly beginning salsa and East Coast swing lessons at 2 p.m., and Argentine tango dance lessons at 4:30 p.m. for gays at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE. Register 404-876-3950, comeoutdancing@mindspring.com

LAMBDA GROUP. Family beyond the northern perimeter, and dining-out. Time varies. 770-457-5264, lambda-group@msn.com

PFLAG — RIVERDALE/METRO SOUTH CHAPTER. Monthly meeting at 3 p.m. in Southern Regional Medical Center's Education Wing, Room A, 11 Upper Riverdale Road SW, Riverdale. 404-366-3675, 404-370-7316, deejaymrrw@aol.com, rhaver2962@aol.com

YOUTHPRIDE. Black males age 13-24 social and discussion group meets 6-8:30 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

MONDAY JUNE 14
ONGOING EVENTS

DREAD GYRLZ INC. Dread Gyrlz Inc., a group for lesbians of color, meets at 8 p.m. 404-299-0030, deadgyrlz04@yahoo.com

HOTLANTA SQUARES. Gay square dancing beginner class from 7-8:30 p.m., intermediate class from 8:30-10 p.m. at First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 770-329-3146, www.iagsdc.org/hotlanta

YOUNG AFRICAN AMERICAN GAY OUTREACH INITIATIVE. Open drop-in social hours from 12-6 p.m. at AID Atlanta, 1438 West Peachtree St. NW, Suite 100. 404-870-7746, www.aidatlanta.org

YOUTHPRIDE. Transgenders and friends support group meets 6:30-8 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

TUESDAY JUNE 15
ONGOING EVENTS

ATLANTA EXECUTIVE NETWORK. Gay business professionals' networking organization meets for lunch at 1:55 a.m. at Houlihan's Colony Square, 1197 Peachtree St. NE. 404-724-9008, www.aen.org

BOY TALK. Gay men ages 18-24. 6:30-8 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

CHARIS CIRCLE. Weekly meeting of high school age women writers. 5-6:30 p.m. Charis Books & More, 1189 Euclid Ave. NE. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

GEORGIA DYKES ON BIKES. 7 p.m. at Cowtippers, 1600 Piedmont Ave. www.georgia.dykesonbikes.org

HOTLANTA SQUARES. Gay square dancing advanced class from 8-10 p.m. at First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 770-329-3146, www.iagsdc.org/hotlanta

OURSONG. Rehearsal 7:15-9:30 p.m. at Oakhurst Baptist Church, 222 E. Lake Drive, Decatur. 404-542-3025, www.oursongatlanta.com

WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP. Twice-monthly talk and workshops for lesbian, bisexual, and questioning women from 7:30-9 p.m. at the Rainbow Center in the office of Congregation Bet Haverim, 2676 Clairmont Road NE. 404-235-6800, www.therainbowcenter.org

WOMYN'S GROUP. Gay women ages 18-24 watch and discuss "The L Word." 6:30-8 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

YOUTHPRIDE. Drop-in hours from 4-6:30 p.m. at YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

ZAMI. Audre Lorde reading and discussion group from 7-8:30 p.m. at the ZAMI office, 111 East Maple Street, Decatur. 404-370-0920, www.zami.org

WEDNESDAY JUNE 16
ONGOING EVENTS

ATLANTA STICK-N-RUDDER. Gay pilots and aviation enthusiasts' monthly social at 6:30 p.m. at Peachtree-DeKalb Airport, 2000 Airport Road, Chamblee. www.atlantasticknrudder.org

IN THE LIFE. Support group for gay and bisexual black men ages 18-25. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Positive Impact, 139 Ralph McGill Blvd., 3rd Floor. 404-870-7746, kevin.bynes@aidatlanta.org

TEEN GROUP. Gays ages 13-17. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

YOUNG ADULT GROUP. Gays ages 18-24. 6:30-8 p.m. YouthPride, 107 N. Candler Road, Decatur. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

YOUNG MEN'S GROUP. Life issues drop-in discussion group for gay black men ages 18-30. 6:30-8 p.m. at Positive Impact, 139 Ralph McGill Blvd., 3rd Floor. 404-870-7746

THURSDAY JUNE 17
ONGOING EVENTS

ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS. Rehearsals from 7:30-10 p.m. at First Metropolitan Community Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road, Suite 200. 404-320-1030, www.agmchorus.org

LAGENDER INC. Transgender/transsexual support group. 6-7:30 p.m. at Aniz Inc., 233 Mitchell St., Suite 200. 404-767-5644

FRIDAY JUNE 18

ATLANTA MEN FOR ALL CULTURES. Gay men's social organization holds a safe sex awareness night at 11 p.m. at Jungle, 2115 Faulkner Road. 404-892-7020, http://atlmenforallcultures.org

ONGOING EVENTS

CHARIS CIRCLE. Trans-inclusive women's monthly open-mike night meets for sign-up at 7:30 p.m. and performances at 8 p.m. at Charis Books & More, 1189

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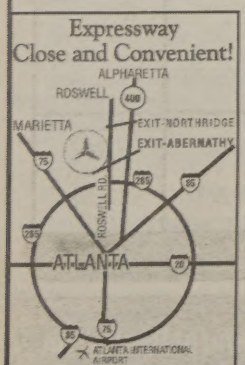

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local life

Sports buffs

Some 75 players on five teams took part in the Rainbow Classic Basketball Tournament last weekend in an effort to build unity among local lesbian organizations and raise funds for the DeKalb Women's Resource Center, organizers say. ZAMI's Volcanoes took first place, and the team from the Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus came in second. Some 150 spectators turned out for the June 5 event. (Photos by Sher Pruitt)

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editorial

Where's Shirley?

The mayor once kept a **visible presence** in gay Atlanta. But now our issues aren't getting the **care and feeding** we expect.

By MATTHEW A. HENNIE

LIKE A PASSAGE FROM THE children's book "Where's Waldo? The Fantastic Journey," gay Atlantans are wondering, "Where's Shirley?"

Like Waldo, Shirley Franklin embarked upon a fantastic voyage. In 2001, she sought the mayor's office to clean up City Hall and return respect and accountability to city government. She rose to the top of a gay-friendly field of three candidates and set out to live up to her campaign promise of "I'll make you proud."

Similar to Waldo and his Waldo Watchers, Shirley has her Shirley Watchers, diverse groups of supporters that helped propel her into office with their money, time and political wisdom. Key among those groups is the city's sizable gay population.

But lately, Shirley's Gay Watchers are a bit befuddled.

Franklin skipped the HRC Dinner last month, a high-profile event she's attended in the past. She accepted then rejected an invitation to speak at the June meeting of the Atlanta Executive Network. And she was noncommittal about appearing at Pride this month, an event she attended for at least the last three years.

The public snubs hint at a growing mishandling of gay matters — both symbolic and substantive — in the Franklin administration. The timing couldn't be worse, as Franklin faces a decision on what to do with the brewing controversy over two gay members of the Druid Hills Golf Club. At stake in the matter is the city's untested non-discrimination ordinance.

Attorneys are studying options for the mayor, who said last week that she "wants to take actions that are winning options." Franklin added that she wants to protect the ordinance, but is concerned that the measure will be defined by the first case. A *gay* case.

Franklin has shown since taking office that she can be a cheerleader or a bully when the job requires it, a capable chief executive with a gift for salesmanship. In her biggest feat yet, she'll likely (and rightly) convince city residents to approve a sales tax hike next month to pay for massive sewer repairs.

So it's exasperating to hear Franklin express concern about how the city's non-discrimination ordinance — an inclusive measure that bans all sorts of bias beyond that based on sexual orientation — might be perceived if the Druid Hills case goes to court.

The mayor should sanction the club and defend the ordinance in court. If anyone at City Hall can make the case for the ordinance — and sell it to the public — it's Franklin.

CRITICIZING A FRIEND AND ALLY IS difficult. Franklin has met most of the 11 campaign pledges she made to gay voters, putting her on track to become the city's most gay-friendly mayor. Until recently, Shirley's Gay Watchers could count on the mayor to speak up — and appear in person — when it mattered.

But the recent missteps by the Franklin administration fed grumbling among some gay leaders, and this newspaper, that the mayor was losing touch with an important constituency.

Gary Cox, Franklin's gay deputy chief operating officer, was placed on unpaid leave last November, removing the mayor's top advisor on gay issues. Cathy Woolard, a lesbian, resigned as city council president in April, leaving gay residents without a well-placed advocate — and one that has the mayor's ear.

The Franklin administration heard the rumblings and scheduled an early-morning meeting June 3 to quell the discontent. Organized by Luz Borrero, who replaced Cox in January, invitations went out to more than two dozen gay and AIDS organizations.

Southern Voice was purposefully left off the guest list, though we crashed the session and sat in anyway.

Franklin bristled at criticism during the session that she hasn't kept a visible presence at gay events. She explained that other matters, chief among them addressing the city's sewer crisis, demanded her attention. Pride conflicts each year with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the organization requires more of her time this year, she said.

Characteristic of Franklin's style, she made no excuses for missing recent gay events. "I can't move an agenda in city government unless I have a high-level presence," she said.

That's exactly the point of Shirley's Gay Watchers. In a time when our presence is diminished inside City Hall, we need our friends to speak up.

Gay marriage presents a case in point. During the weeks-long battle in the General Assembly over a proposed constitutional amendment, Franklin appeared at only one brief press conference to oppose the measure. And it was only at the prodding of Southern Voice after the event that Franklin said, haltingly, that she supports gay marriage.

When asked about the marriage amendment during the session last week, Franklin did little more than say she's "not afraid of the issue." She continued, "In Atlanta, the issue cuts both ways politically," a clear reference to the ill will gay marriage elicits from the socially conservative African-American congregations that also supported her mayoral campaign.

But Franklin is the perfect bridge between the city's gay and black residents that sit on opposite sides of the issue. Franklin gets that gay marriage is a civil rights issue. She understands the importance of political support from the city's religious leaders.

The mayor could effectively bring the two sides together at a time when gay groups must build coalitions with heterosexual organizations to beat back the amendment in November.

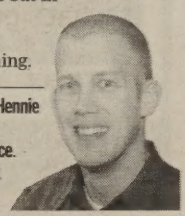
THROUGHOUT THE NEARLY HOUR-long session with gay activists last week — apparently the first in her 30 months in office, despite meeting monthly with religious leaders— Borrero (and two other high-ranking administration officials) sat at the mayor's side.

Attendees pushed the mayor to attend Pride and AEN, but unfortunately no one talked about the pink elephant in the room: why the mayor failed to name an openly gay official to her administration in the seven months since Cox left.

It was only through prodding by Southern Voice that the mayor, in a brief interview this week, said Borrero is gay. Borrero joined the administration last January, yet it wasn't until June — and after much criticism — that Franklin said her team really does include a high-ranking gay official. It's more proof that gay issues are being mishandled.

Our enemies abound during this critical period in Georgia. It's time to push and prod our friends into speaking out, not in whimpers but in bold strokes.

Make us proud, Shirley. We're watching.



@ Matthew A. Hennie is editor of Southern Voice. He can be reached at mhennie@sovo.com.

letters

Shame on those happy that Reagan is dead

To the Editors:

After the passing of former President Reagan, I was amazed and saddened at the conversations I overhead. It angered me that people were glad he was dead and made comments like, "Thank goodness there is one fewer Republican in the world."

I am not writing to defend President Reagan or his policies. I am writing to defend the respect that the office of the president deserves.

Shame on those who applauded the death of a former president of our great country. Shame on those who played partisan politics in a time when we should be respectful of the family in their time of sorrow.

BRIAN L. BATES
Atlanta

Knight wicked for blaming Iraq prison abuse on gays

To the Editors:

Re "Conservative leader blames gays for Iraqi prison abuse," news, May 21:

Sometimes I am amazed at the ignorance of some educated people and though I feel strongly about freedom of speech, there are times when I feel some people should not be able to speak at all.

It was a waste of time reporting on Robert Knight's article for WorldNetDaily.com. There isn't any news at all in this piece of trash.

I truly believe Knight and the WorldNetDaily.com have not one clue about the reality of the situation at the Iraq prison. They wouldn't know the truth if it smacked them squarely in the face.

May Robert Knight burn for his hatred and the injustice he would heap upon those he does not understand. There is still time for him to seek forgiveness and change his wicked ways. He should repent today or burn in the fires of hell for eternity.

JOHN ALLEN
Atlanta

Life-saving meds must be available to all

To the Editors:

Outrageous!

An article earlier this year correctly stated the facts about Fuzeon not being offered through Georgia's AIDS Drug Assistance Program ("Critics decry escalating HIV drug prices," news, Jan. 16).

The introduction of Fuzeon, a fusion inhibitor, is a sentinel event in the lives of people living with HIV. This is the first in a new class of drugs to block the replication of the AIDS virus. This drug, in combination with other drugs available through ADAP, has proven to result in undetectable viral loads in 80 percent of patients.

How then can we not offer this hope to all? Offering this drug to only six people in the entire state of Georgia, with 26,000 infected individuals, is unacceptable.

As a nurse advocate for people living with HIV, I ask the question why aren't we up in arms about this appalling selectivity?

This life-saving medication should be offered to any appropriate patient. To neglect offering this option is unconscionable.

LOUISE PERRY
Atlanta

No real controversy at Georgia Equality

To the Editors:

Re: "Georgia Equality interviews finalists to lead ballot fight," news, May 21:

The article reports that the state's open records law requires government agencies to release names of applicants at least 14 days prior to a final selection. Georgia Equality is not a government agency; it is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, so as the article later reports, the open records law does not apply.

Introduction of false comparisons is an old debating trick intended to sway opinion. Georgia Equality went through the appropriate selection process for the new campaign manager.

The article also reports that Georgia Equality requested a second extension to file tax documents for this year, missing a May 15 deadline. I read this to insinuate something was amiss.

If your reporter had asked why, he would have learned that Georgia Equality is fortunate to have an outstanding local CPA provide free accounting services. Since these services are provided pro bono, our CPA has paying clients that take higher priority.

It is not uncommon for non-profits to request extensions. Georgia Equality has requested extensions for the past several years. Rather than attempting to stir up criticism, the article should praise the organization for wisely using funds.

The article further reports that neither the board chair nor the office manager knew the budget for the current fiscal year. But in the very next sentence, the article reports that Southern Voice was provided the fiscal year budget. If the information was given, why mention that the board chair and office manager were unaware of the budget amount?

If Southern Voice wants financial information regarding Georgia Equality or any other non-profit organization, you should contact the person most responsible for the financials — usually the treasurer.

CARTER ELLIOTT
Treasurer
Georgia Equality
Atlanta

THE Q

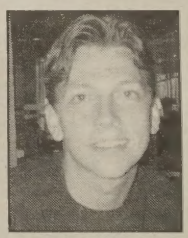
Questions about what's going on in **your** world.

Interviews and photos by Van Gower

Georgia Equality recently hired Kris Pierce to manage its campaign against an anti-gay marriage amendment. Can a straight man lead this fight?

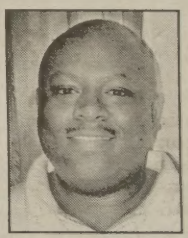
'I think so. Absolutely. Maybe he'll be the link between the two communities. Maybe he can be a good mediator between the two because sometimes people aren't really willing to accommodate the gay and lesbian community, and they might feel more comfortable with someone who's straight.'

Lamiiko Moore, 23
Downtown Atlanta



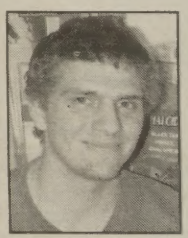
'It would actually be a good thing in terms of having someone from the straight community work to convince others in his same community of how good a thing it would be for gays to be able to marry. Having someone whom they can relate to is kind of a neat idea.'

Justice Leak, 24
East Point



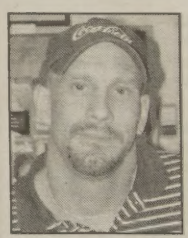
'I think he can, based on the fact that he seems to be pro gay community. But, on the other side, does he really understand our issues. ... This guy is straight, but is he going to be relevant to our issues? ... I'd give him a chance, I'd give anybody a chance, but if he's not doing his job, just kick him out.'

Peter Phillips, 34
Stockbridge



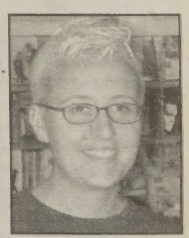
'I think that he may not understand our point of view quite as well as a gay person would. But he is probably going to work better as a liaison between the gay community and the straight community, because he understands where the heterosexuals are coming from and can reason with them better.'

Erik Kruszewski, 18
Norcross



'I don't care if he's gay or straight, as long as he knows how to play the political game and work the system so that he gets the ultimate goal done.'

David Porter, 39
Decatur



'As an organization dedicated to furthering the interests of the gay community, shouldn't Georgia Equality reflect that objective in their hiring policies? ... I don't understand why a gay rights group wouldn't want to spend a bit of extra energy finding an equally qualified director who is actually a member of our community.'

Kristin Johnson, 23
Midtown

viewpoint MATT FOREMAN

Steven, I know for a fact you would be alive today if the **Reagan administration** had mounted a response to the AIDS epidemic.

Open letter to my best friend

DEAR STEVEN,

I so much wish you were here today to tell me what to do. You would know if it's right to comment on the death of former President Ronald Reagan, or if I should just let pass the endless paeans to his greatness.

But you're not here. The policies of the Reagan administration saw to that.

Yes, Steven, I do feel for the family and friends of the former president. The death of a loved one is always a profoundly sad occasion, and Mr. Reagan was loved by many. I have tremendous empathy and respect for Mrs. Reagan, who lovingly cared for him through excruciating years of Alzheimer's.

Sorry, Steven, but even on this day I'm not able to set aside the shaking anger I feel over Reagan's non-response to the AIDS epidemic or for the continuing anti-gay legacy of his administration.

Is it personal? Of course. AIDS was first reported in 1981, but the media reported that President Reagan could not bring himself to address the plague until March 31, 1987, at which time there were 60,000 reported cases of full-blown AIDS and 30,000 deaths.

I remember that day, Steven. You were staying round-the-clock in Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital caring for Bruce Cooper, your dying partner of over 15 years. It was another 41 days of utter agony for both of you before Bruce died.

During those years of White House silence and inaction, how many other dear friends did we see sicken and die hideous deaths?

IS IT PERSONAL? YES, STEVEN. I know for a fact that you would be alive today if the Reagan administration had mounted even a tepid response to the epidemic. If protease inhibitors had been available in July of 1995 instead of December, you'd still be here.

I wouldn't feel so angry if the Reagan administration's failing was due to ignorance or bureaucratic ineptitude. No, Steven, we knew then it was deliberate.

The government's response was dictated by the grip of evangelical Christian conservatives who saw gay people as sinners and AIDS as God's well-deserved punishment.

Remember? The White House Director of Communications, Patrick Buchanan, once argued in print that AIDS is nature's revenge on gay men. Reagan's Secretary of Education, William Bennett, and his domestic policy adviser, Gary Bauer, made sure that science — and basic tenets of Christianity, for that matter — never got in the way of politics or what they saw as "God's" work.

Even so, I think I could let go of this anger if this was just another overwhelmingly sad chapter in our nation's past. It is not. Steven, can you believe that the unholy pact President Reagan and the Republican Party entered into with the forces of religious intolerance has not weakened, but grown exponentially stronger?

Can you believe that the U.S. government is still bowing to right-wing extremists and fighting condom distribution and explicit HIV education, even while AIDS is killing millions across the world?

Or that "devout" Christians have forced the scrapping of AIDS prevention programs targeted at HIV-negative gay and bisexual men in favor of bullshit "abstinence-only-until-marriage" initiatives?

Or the shameless duplicity of these same forces seeking to forever outlaw even the hope of marriage for gay people?

Or that Reagan stalwarts like Buchanan, Bennett and Bauer are still grinding their homophobic axes?

NO, STEVEN, I DO NOT PRESUME TO judge Ronald Reagan's soul or heart. He may very well have been a nice guy.

In fact, I don't think that Reagan hated gay people. I'm sure some of his and Nancy's best friends were gay.

But I do know that the Reagan administration's policies on AIDS and anything gay-related resulted — and continue to result — in despair and death.

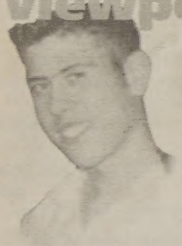
Oh, Steven, how much I wish so much you were here.

Matt

Editors' Note: On Nov. 20, 1995, Steven Powsner died of complications from AIDS at the age of 40. He had been president of the New York City Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center from 1992 to 1994.

Matt Foreman is executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force and can be reached at **mforeman@ngltf.org**.

viewpoint JAMES KIRCHICK



It's time the gay rights movement at home began focusing on the fate of gays in those countries where the treatment is **still brutal**.

Gays abroad need our help

IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR STRUGGLES over gay marriage, the Boy Scouts and sodomy laws, it is easy to develop blinders when it comes to what might initially appear to be peripheral causes. Surely, the past five years have been the most eventful in the gay rights movement with acceptance reaching an all-time high.

If current trends are any indication, the American gay rights cause should even be concluded within the next several decades. Gay marriage will eventually become reality across the country, and legal discrimination will come to an end.

This will not, of course, erase homophobia from society; no more than the Civil Rights Act of 1964 erased racism toward blacks. But equality for people of all sexual orientations in the United States will at the very least be written into law, thus realizing the accomplishment of the modern gay rights agenda.

But throughout the world, gays face barbaric oppression that is almost medieval in nature. Up until Afghanistan was liberated in late 2001, the Taliban would regularly flatten gays with massive stones.

Robert Mugabe, the dictator of Zimbabwe, has cracked down on gays and publicly labeled them "worse than pigs." Egypt imprisons homosexuals, and Saudi Arabia beheads them.

We have a responsibility to stand up for gay rights not just at home, but abroad. Gay Americans have a special responsibility to speak out, for our nation has always served as a place of refuge for the oppressed.

Having achieved economic success and to a large degree, mainstream acceptance, it would be all too easy to rest on our laurels. Many gays in this country are ambivalent about the indignity of their inferior status, choosing to lead closeted or apathetic lives.

This attitude must change not only for the sake of gay rights in America, but for fellow gays living outside this country's borders.

WE COULD TAKE SOME LESSONS FROM American Jews on how a domestic civil rights cause can effectively turn its focus to the international scene. For many years, national Jewish organizations spent a great deal of effort on domestic concerns, encouraging pluralism and denouncing discrimination against religious and ethnic groups.

Once Jews became largely accepted, international issues like global anti-Semitism and Israel became the raison d'etre of American Jewish groups. This is not to say that American Jewry once ignored Israel, but talk to American Jewish leaders today about what concerns them most and you will almost always hear about international anti-Semitism and Israel.

When faced with decisions to fight nativity scenes on town commons or Islamist terror against Israeli civilians, American Jews have wisely made the latter crisis a priority.

This is not to suggest that the United States should traipse around the world invading nations that do not live up to our standards of gay tolerance. But there are many things that the United States can do, short of military action, to support gay rights abroad.

EMPLOYING THE MORAL AUTHORITY of the United States against our enemies, much like Ronald Reagan did against the Soviet Union, is something that left-leaning gay leaders are loathe to do. But it is undeniable that America stands on the side of human dignity: Compare our record with those states that actively persecute gays.

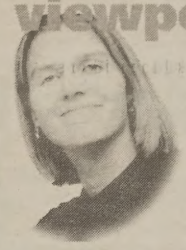
Withholding economic aid to repressive nations is another possibility, along with affording asylum to gays fleeing repressive states. Once gays in this country achieve full marriage equality and win the fight to erase discrimination from the books, non-profit gay money, which is quite plentiful, should be devoted to making gay rights a central part of the American international agenda.

These domestic victories are closer than many gay activists imagine them to be, and so national gay organizations would do well prepare for future battles.

With the current rapid progress, we are emerging more strident than ever in our demands for fair treatment, and these successes have empowered a new generation of gay activists. What agenda these future leaders set is impossible to predict, but advocating the use of American power to aid gay people abroad is a noble start.

James Kirchick is a sophomore at Yale University and a columnist for the Yale Daily News; he can be reached at **james.kirchick@yale.edu**.

viewpoint JENNIFER VANASCO



If we won't spend money at businesses like **Curves gyms** owned by anti-gay Christians, then we can't complain about their boycotts.

Putting tolerance to the real test

MY MOM LOVES CURVES FITNESS centers for women. She loves working out at Curves so much, in fact, that she's been talking about some day opening her own franchise.

It's not hard to see why the world's largest fitness chain appeals to women like my mom — women who've never been comfortable in traditional gyms because they're uncomfortable with their bodies, or are older and don't know how to use the equipment.

The program is easy to understand and follow. Women circle around from machine to machine, encouraging each other, jogging on rubber mats to keep up their heart rate while they're waiting.

There are no mirrors to undercut the good feelings that come from exercising; there are no men leering at them from nearby equipment; there are no svelte 20-somethings running for hours on the treadmill without breaking a sweat.

I know a lot of lesbians who go to Curves and quite a few who own franchises.

But the recent controversy over the values of Gary Heavin, the entrepreneur behind Curves, has made what once would have been a matter of personal satisfaction for my mom into a moral dilemma.

And not just for my mom but for women all over who feel empowered by Curves' pro-woman message and yet are dismayed to learn that Heavin is a pro-life, born again Christian who donates to anti-choice causes.

THE UPROAR STARTED IN LATE APRIL with a San Francisco Chronicle column that made a lot of allegations, some of which turned out to be untrue. Columnist Ruth Rosen wrote that the Curves founder had given $5 million to some of the most militant anti-abortion groups in the country directly from Curves' annual gross revenues.

If that were the case, the decision would be easy. No self-respecting feminist would give money to a place that would only funnel it toward vicious anti-abortion groups like Operation Save America.

But that's not what's true, according to the online magazine Salon and a correction ran later in the Chronicle. Heavin actually supports three centers, the largest of which is a Catholic-run health care facility that provides services to many indigent, uninsured residents of central Texas.

None of the facilities he supports provides the option of abortion — but none of them actively advocates against abortion, either. And — this is important — Heavin supports them through his personal wealth, not through the company.

Heavin has not hidden his pro-life and anti-gay beliefs. He lets potential franchise owners know that the company is based on "biblical values," though that's not something pushed on to visitors to the gyms.

He told Today's Christian, a magazine affiliated with Billy Graham's Christianity Today, that, "there is nothing healthy about abortion." In an op-ed in the Waco-Tribune Herald this year, he railed against Planned Parenthood, saying he didn't want his 10-year-old daughter to be "taught masturbation and told that homosexuality is normal."

THIS PUTS OUR BACKS UP, DOESN'T IT? We get upset when we learn that people who own businesses where we spend our money are against those things we hold most dear.

We have always been quick to boycott. When we hear that Coors or Domino's Pizza or Cracker Barrel is anti-gay or anti-choice or racist, we take our dollars elsewhere. And this is the right response if a company's profits are going to a cause we don't believe in.

But the hard question is whether feminists and good political lesbians should pull our funds from businesses just because the owner expresses personal beliefs that differ from our own?

After all, we wouldn't want born again Christians to stop going to the local grocery store just because the owner was gay, marched in the Pride parade every year and gave a percentage of his own money to the Human Rights Campaign.

And Curves, despite its founder's anti-woman politics, really is empowering to women. Besides helping them get healthier, the franchises are easy to run for first-time business owners and much less expensive than most. Having more women control their financial destiny can only be a good thing.

We can't force people to change their beliefs. We can only encourage them to change their actions. And in Heavin's case, I'm not sure his actions are worth changing.

I don't know if my mom will buy that Curves franchise. She's strongly pro-choice. But if she decided to, I guess I would support her. In this case, it's her right to choose.

@ **Jennifer Vanasco** is a Chicago-based syndicated columnist and can be reached at vanasco@chicagofreepress.com.

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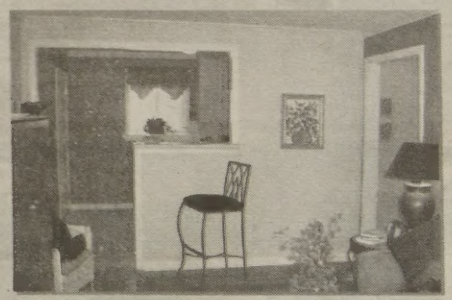

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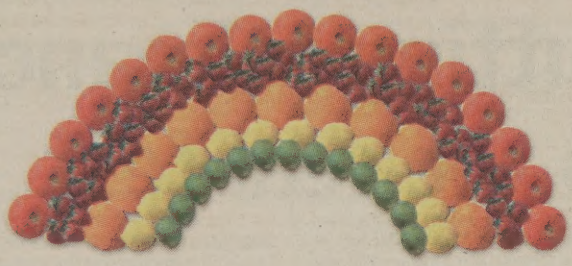

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sound off!

Editors' note: The following comments about the gay issues of the day or stories published in Southern Voice were made by readers online at **www.sovo.com** or by telephone at **1-800-485-6907.**

The Issue: "Gay group hires leader for ballot fight" (news, June 4)

The fact that Kris Pierce is a heterosexual man gives our cause a credibility we would not have if someone from the GLBT community headed up this effort. Our opponents would only laugh at us if a GLBT person was the leader. They cannot do this now. I fully support Georgia Equality's courage to ensure that we have the very best qualified person for this job.

The Issue: "Blame Oprah for killing marriage" (op-ed by Topher Payne, June 4)

This column just turned off this heterosexual. I now understand why some people are sick of the fag attitude. Payne represents as nothing more than a shallow, uneducated snot. I know there are smart homosexuals out there. Why don't you find one and give them Topher's job.

Apparently, Topher hasn't been to any Cher concerts. While Cher does have a gay following, gays certainly do not "own" her. One look around at a Cher concert shows her fan base is made up of all races, genders, ages, preferences and society ranks. Just because this is a "viewpoint" column doesn't mean he can make things up and present them as facts.

I must admire Topher Payne's take on the whole gay marriage issue. It seems he has hit upon the right idea. Oprah, all kidding aside, is not getting married. Most career-minded women aren't either. In today's society, it's easier to do the single thing and have a career without the hassles of being tied down. I really enjoyed Topher's take on how marriage in general would be enhanced by making it equal for all.

The Issue: "Overcoming the enemy within" (editorial by Kevin Naff, May 28)

For some of those who remain closeted, the decision is not one of courage, but one of survival. Everyone does not live in large gay metropolitan areas; these people cannot simply come out because they have no support. There are plenty of these people who come to Pride each year because it is the only time they can truly be free from reprisal.

To characterize the decision to come out as simply a matter of courage is to ignore some of the reasons that many do not want to identify with what they feel being "gay" means. They see a culture that only seems to value certain traits, like being white, young, good-looking, hairless, shallow, pretentious, self destructive, affluent, over-achieving, and so on. The truth is that if you are just an average person, you have little or no value to the "community."

The Issue: "Bias case again before Franklin after mediation fails" (news, June 4)

A "true test of the mayor's commitment" should not be wasted on a snooty country club that excludes others by way of checking account balances. Why should we all care about this issue? Let Lee Kyser take her kids to the public pool and rub elbows with everyday kids.

I suggest the gay elite sell that Human Rights Campaign building and start their own club. Oh wait, that's called the HRC dinner.

The Issue: "A nasty edit: Lesbian scenes missing from Janet's new video (Action Alert, May 28)

I was dismayed by your rather negative portrayal of Janet Jackson. Someone not familiar with her would gather that Janet is homophobic, especially with the very misleading subheading "Janet's anti-gay past." When you read further, the article reports it wasn't even about her, but someone she collaborated with. Any fan knows Janet is one of the least homophobic in the business. She has proven it with songs like "Together Again," which is about her friends who have died of AIDS, and "Free Xone," which deals directly with homophobia.

The Issue: Gay marriage

In the current push for marriage, it strikes me odd that no one is educating couples on the legal options available to them outside of marriage. In the event gay marriage is outlawed, there are other options to secure a couple's assets. The simple tasks of creating a will, powers of attorney, and shared banking accounts are not done by most gay couples. Even in the real world of "legal marriage," without these documents a couple's future can be fairly shaky.

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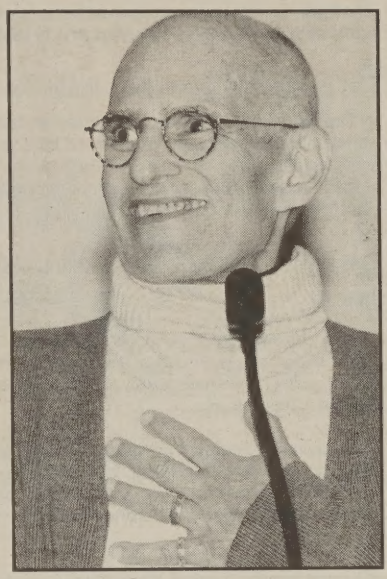


"Our murderer is dead. The man who murdered more gay people than anyone in the entire history of the world, is dead. More people than Hitler even. ... Gays were as hated under Reagan as Jews were under Hitler."

*Gay playwright and ACT UP founder **Larry Kramer**, in a column titled "Adolf Reagan," blaming former President Reagan for not responding to the AIDS epidemic and for hating gays because he worried his own son, Ron Reagan, Jr., was gay (Advocate, July 6)*

"President Reagan's inspirational vision for America relied on optimism, hope and an enduring faith in individual freedom. This is a great loss for the nation."

Log Cabin Republicans Executive Director Patrick Guerriero, who also said Reagan "will go down in history as one of our nation's greatest presidents" and praising the former California governor for opposing a 1978 anti-gay initiative (Press release, June 7)

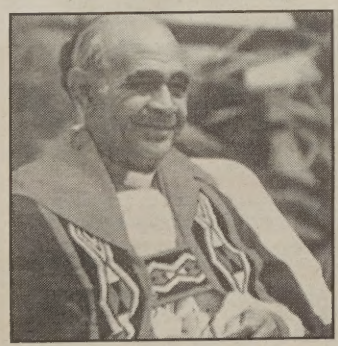
"The number of people dying was horrific. The disease was very visible — people were suffering and wasting. It was a very volatile environment, there was so much anger at the government for not paying attention."

San Francisco AIDS activist Rene Durazzo, remembering the "chronic death" that energized protests against the Reagan administration (Associated Press, June 9)

"The political powers-that-be in Virginia want to tell homosexuals that they are not welcome. That Virginia, far from being open to the changing attitudes about homosexuality, is firm in its antipathy toward homosexuals."

Editorial on Virginia's Marriage Affirmation Act, which prohibits recognition of civil unions and any other "partnership contracts" entered into by gay couples (Hampton Roads Daily Press, Newport News, Va., June 8)

"[Homosexual sodomy] tears at the fabric of society, contributes to the breakdown of the family unit, and leads to the spread of dangerous, communicable diseases."



Texas GOP platform, which opposes the legalization of sodomy and supports only "traditional" marriage as "a God-ordained, legal and moral commitment only between a natural man and a natural woman" (Associated Press, June 4)

"That's not quoting Scripture either. ... I'm just basing it on my human — I s'pose I should be basing it on Scripture also, but I'm basing it on human accepted norms."

***Whakahuihui Vercoe**, 75, the newly appointed bishop of the Anglican Church in New Zealand, who said he has a vision of a world without homosexuality (New Zealand Herald, June 5)*

"This parade is not only ugly, it's also a provocation. ... Even people distant from Jerusalem must grasp that this is a sacred city for the Jewish people, and the world as a whole. This isn't Paris, and it isn't London."

Uri Lupolianski, mayor of Jerusalem, the day after the city's annual Gay Pride parade held downtown (Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv, June 6)

"For $2,500, donors can spend an evening with Terry and a performer who had led the movement to degrade our modern culture. Porn hotlines and bisexual erotica. Who knew Terry was so kinky?"

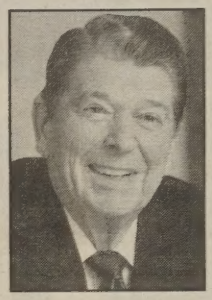
*Barry Rubin, executive director of the Nebraska state Democratic Party, criticizing a fund-raiser for Republican Congressman Lee Terry to be held at a **Madonna** concert (Associated Press, June 7)*

action! alert

Reagan revisionists

Posthumous coverage of ex-president glosses over AIDS issue, activists say

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY



AIDS activists criticize early media coverage of deceased former President Ronald Reagan as fawning, saying the reports ignore Reagan's lack of response to AIDS during his presidency. (Photo by AP)

LESS THAN THREE DAYS AFTER FORmer President Ronald Reagan's death on June 5, longtime gay AIDS activists Eric Rofes and Larry Kramer fumed over the rose-colored spectacles mainstream media outlets used to view and recount Reagan's presidency.

"[Coverage of Reagan's death] seems stupid, uncritical and amnesiatic," Rofes said. "It sounds like they are written by people who didn't live through the '80s or were unaware of the effects of the Reagan policies on people who are not white, affluent and male."

Kramer, founder of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, an AIDS advocacy organization born during the Reagan administration, was agitated at the glowing media attention the former president continues to receive, he said.

"Everyone wants to know what I think about this fucker," Kramer said, referring to an essay he wrote for the upcoming issue of the Advocate, a national gay magazine.

The essay, entitled "Adolf Reagan," includes Kramer's summation that Reagan was a "murderer" who neglected to confront AIDS when it became an epidemic in the early part of his presidency.

Kramer also blasted the "hateful New York Times" for early coverage of Reagan's death that did not mention criticism of the president's "Silence=Death" AIDS policy.

The New York Times declined interview requests but released a brief written statement.

"We are aware of the polarizing nature of President Reagan's domestic policies and are planning to include that element in our coverage," said Toby Usnik, public relations director for the New York Times.

A June 9 article on page 18 of the Times noted Reagan's critics. The piece appeared four days after Reagan's death and one day after Usnik's statement to Southern Voice.

The Associated Press also released on June 9 its first article about criticism of Reagan's AIDS policies. Similar stories ran in the Los Angeles Times and Newsday's June 9 editions.

AIDS was not once mentioned in the Washington Post, which ran a 7,000-word article on June 6 reviewing Reagan's presidency and personal life. Quick mention was made of Reagan's poor handling of the epidemic deep within a front-page story published three days later about "schisms" from his administration.

EARLY POSTHUMOUS COVERAGE OF Reagan is not balanced to reflect the vastly disparate opinions held by "queer, black, Latino, feminist and poor" people, according to Rofes.

"None of those voices were included," he said. "It's kind of like, 'Let's allow people who share in his spirit of greed and privilege to extol him again.'"

Mike King, public editor for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, said that it is "a natural outgrowth of American culture to say good things about someone's passing" immediately after death.

"There is a tendency in the first few days of coverage to lionize their lives," King said.

But King expects the AJC to take a more critical approach in the coming days, he said.

U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman (D–Ca.), who advocated for AIDS funding and awareness in the House during the Reagan administration, remained critical of the former president's AIDS policies last November during a controversy over "The Reagans," a made-for-TV movie originally slated for CBS.

"While the administration looked the other way, incalculable harm was done as thousands and thousands died and the disease spread unchecked," Waxman said in a written statement made then to Southern Voice.

"The Reagans" was bumped from CBS and shown on Showtime.

ACTION! INFO

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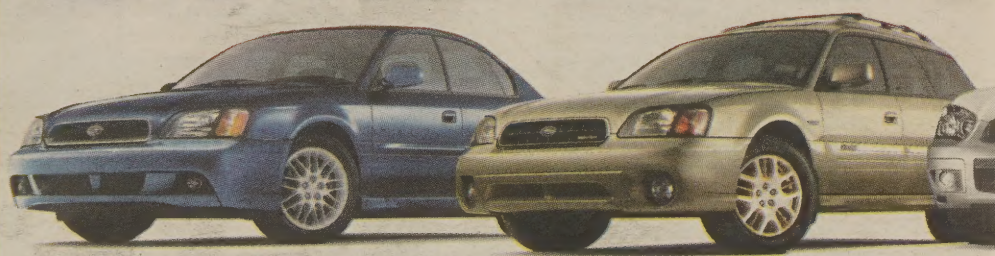

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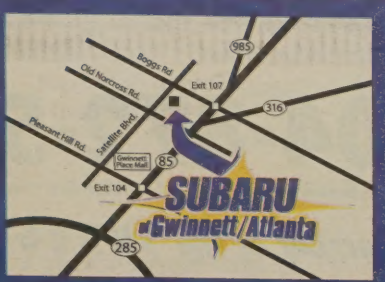

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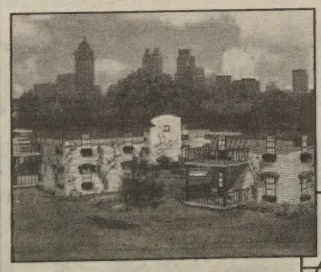

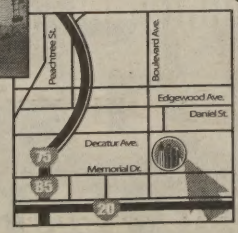

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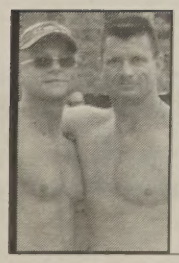

Disney divas

Orlando hosts thousands at annual weekend of parties, parks and pansies.

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Cagey restaging

Local production of long-loved musical is mindful about families of origin, families of choice

By JIM FARMER

FEW GAY-THEMED SHOWS HAVE SURVIVED THE years — and the variations — as well as "La Cage Aux Folles."

"La Cage" was a successful play before being turned into the signature '70s French film and its two disastrous sequels. From there, it became a Tony Award-winning Broadway musical in 1983, adapted by Harvey Fierstein with music by Jerry Herman.

But perhaps the most popular incarnation came in 1996 when an Americanized and updated film "The Birdcage" was made starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane.

The story of French nightclub owner Georges and his son who wants to introduce his future in-laws to the family — including Georges' cross-dressing romantic partner Albin — has long been a laugh-getter and gay favorite.

This week, a new production bows at Neighborhood Playhouse. Artistic director Sony Goff, who chose the musical as part of his inaugural season at the Decatur-based theater, says the show is overdue for a local production.

"I'm very proud of this show and think it fits in well with the themes we've dealt with this season," Goff says.

The company's last show was the gay-inclusive "Anton In Show Business."

Goff, who is gay, says he and his crew cannot recall a local version of "La Cage."

"Maybe I'm wrong, but we were talking about this the other day, and no one here remembers it ever being done in Atlanta," Goff says. "I think it might have turned up as a touring show, but no one knows of a local company staging it."

Director Bob Wright, also gay, is excited about mounting "La Cage Aux Folles" as his first show at Neighborhood Playhouse. His version stars Darrel Wofford as Georges and George Deavours as Albin, the long-term couple who try to conceal their life together when Georges' son brings his fiancee's family home for a visit.

"I've always loved the story," says Deavours, a gay actor who himself is no stranger to tackling drag in various roles onstage. "But it's never a role I thought that I would attempt. When I heard about this production, though, I knew I would go after it."

Please see LA CAGE on Page 55

A senior statesman, his wife and their daughter must come to terms with the household of their gay in-laws — including a nightclub owner played by **Darrel Wofford** and **George Deavours** as his cross-dressing life partner — in the classic musical 'La Cage Aux Folles.'

GAY AFFAIR: Annual Tony Awards keeps the telecast inclusive thanks to performers like **Hugh Jackman. Page 51**

RAGING RAGTOPS: Cool convertibles rev up on showroom floors just in time for summer. **Page 59**

eclipse

Atlanta radio station carries gay show

Nationally syndicated gay radio show during June

By KATHY LIDDLE

IF GAY ATLANTA RADIO LISTENERS are scanning the dial any Tuesday in June, they should stop at WABE-FM (90.1) and listen in on the sixth season of "Outright Radio."

Airing at 7 p.m. each Tuesday, the nationally syndicated show strives to reduce homophobia by allowing listeners to hear stories from real gay lives.

David Gilmore produces and hosts the show from Tucson, Ariz. He describes Outright Radio as "the wacky little brainchild" of three "starving artist radical faeries."

The show was born in 1998, when Gilmore, along with friends Scott Jones and Tom Truss, began producing experimental radio pieces in Santa Cruz.

"[Radio was] the obvious choice for people with some stories to tell but no money," Gilmore says.

The show incorporates rich personal narratives, interviews and documentary pieces.

Woven together with Gilmore's commentary and enhanced by brief musical interludes, "Outright Radio" offers listeners a vivid hour-long glimpse into gay lives.

"Good radio ... should explain things in pleasing, intriguing ways that are stimulating enough to form images in people's heads," Gilmore says.

THE FIRST OF THE FIVE SHOWS COMprising this season aired in Atlanta on June 1. "Over the Rainbow" included segments addressing the increasing commercialization of gay pride, the proliferation of the rainbow flag and the experiences of one lesbian couple in a pre-natal yoga class.

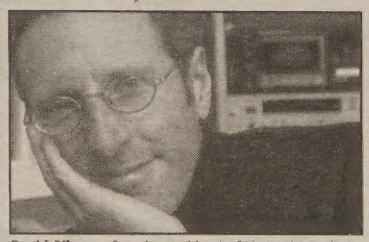
On June 8, "AIDS These Days" covered rising infection rates in the environment of new treatments, maintenance drugs and their side effects, crystal methamphetamine use as well as changing prevention messages.

All previously aired shows can be heard through the Outright Radio Web site.

Stories from gay and lesbian Latinos are featured on June 15.

And on June 22, "The eX Files" offers stories of a grocery store encounter with an ex, a pair of lesbian ex-lovers who found harmony and one gay couple's decade of processing after their three-year relationship ended.

The final show of the season, airing June 29, is "Coming Out Against the Odds." The stories of an out lesbian and gay man in the U.S. Navy are followed by a visit to a gay prom for high school students.



David Gilmore, founder and host of 'Outright Radio,' cites the courage of radio executives like those at Atlanta WABE for the success of his nationally syndicated gay radio show.

PRODUCING THE SHOWS EACH SEASON is an accomplishment in itself, but it is only part of the job. Marketing efforts are time-consuming and often frustrating, according to Gilmore.

Despite the program's critical acclaim, many radio stations remain reluctant to add openly gay voices to the airwaves.

"I go to the radio conventions and look quite ... 'conventional,'" he says. "When I tell people about the show, they check their watch, look at their shoes and start locating the exits."

"We were cornering people in elevators," he adds. "Drunk radio executives dragging themselves back to their rooms. It was not pretty."

Their persistence paid off. A disc landed in the hands of a radio executive from Public Radio International. She subsequently picked up the show for national distribution.

Gilmore notes the enthusiastic response from listeners and the support of radio executives at WABE in Atlanta.

Meanwhile, the show's list of awards continues to grow, including a highly coveted Edward R. Murrow award, three awards from the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and four from the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association.

MORE INFO

Outright Radio on air in Atlanta
Tuesdays in June, 7 p.m.
WABE (90.1 FM)

Outright Radio
c/o KXCI Radio
220 South 4th Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85701
866-688-7234
www.outrightradio.org

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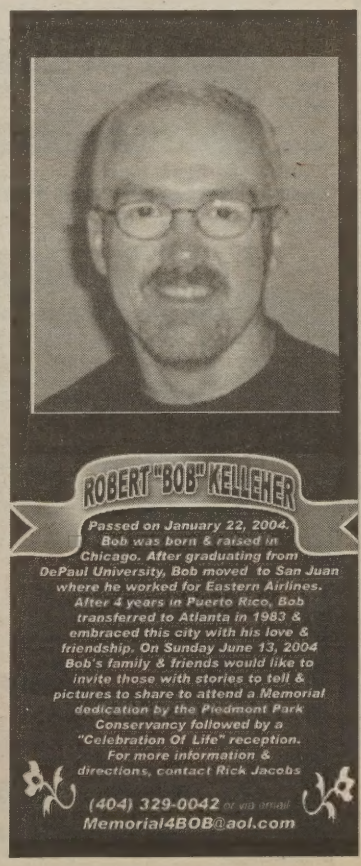
ROBERT "BOB" KELLEHER
Passed on January 22, 2004.
Bob was born & raised in Chicago. After graduating from DePaul University, Bob moved to San Juan where he worked for Eastern Airlines. After 4 years in Puerto Rico, Bob transferred to Atlanta in 1983 & embraced this city with his love & friendship. On Sunday June 13, 2004 Bob's family & friends would like to invite those with stories to tell & pictures to share to attend a Memorial dedication by the Piedmont Park Conservancy followed by a "Celebration Of Life" reception. For more information & directions, contact Rick Jacobs
(404) 329-0042 or via email
Memorial4BOB@aol.com

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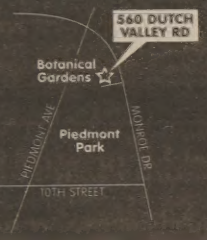

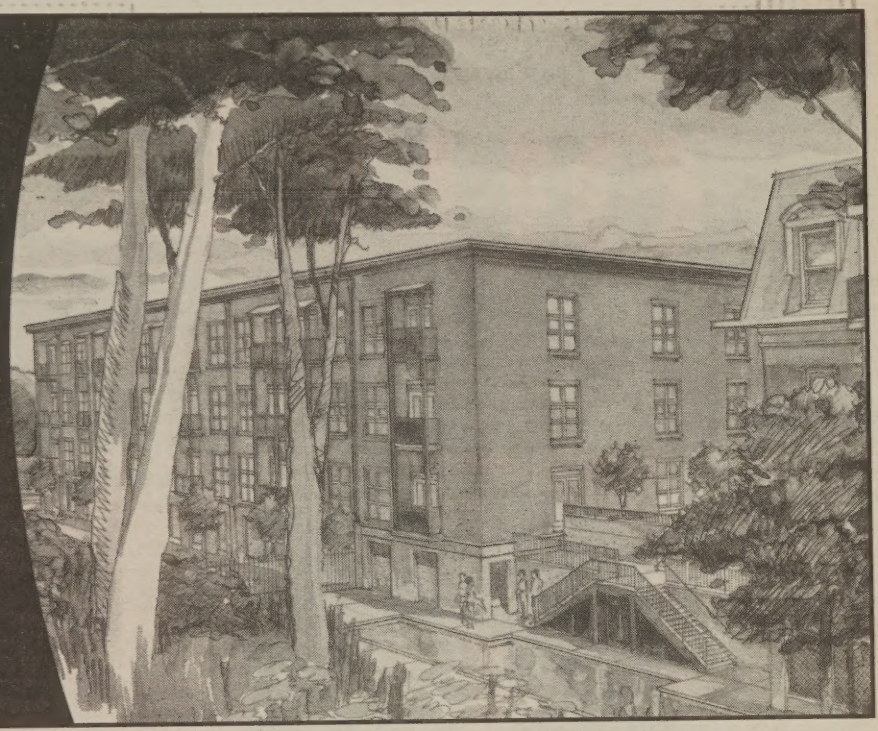

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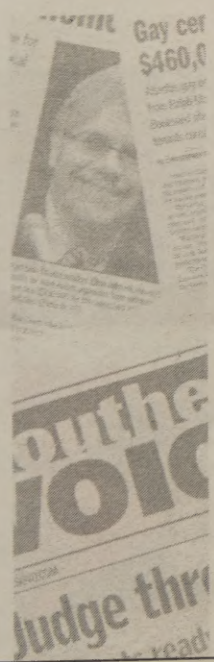
Southern Voice seeks reporter



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Gay chorus kicks off Pride Week with **song and dance** honoring 'Reel Men' from classic movies.

Puttin' on the Ritz

FORGET ABOUT "BOYLAND." HERE come the real men — make that "Reel Men."

The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus steps off the risers again this year for a musical variety show that kicks off Pride Week.

"Reel Men" features songs from classic movie musicals made famous by Hollywood's leading men, including Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby.

The show runs for two nights next weekend.

"It's a big, splashy musical-type event," says Ken Anderson, executive director of AGMC.

The theater's appearance imitates the movie-going atmosphere to "get people into that feel of going to the movies," he says.

As audience members enter, a large slide show of trivia questions simulates pre-show entertainment in movie theaters.

The chorus plans to deck out the Ferst Center for the Arts at Georgia Tech with a full theatrical set. Movie clips and other images are set to be projected throughout the show onto three screens. Each act will include choreography and "choirography."

The staging for some songs incorporates familiar images of the original songs, such as "Singing in the Rain."

VETERAN DANCER DALE DUNCAN says the fun atmosphere of the show takes him back to his days performing in high school and in theme parks.

"People will really have a good time, laughing and forgetting their day while they watch the show," Duncan says.

The spotlight shines on Duncan during a tap duet.

AGMC members are the primary performers, singing and dancing alongside guests such as George Staib and Tara Shepard Myers, faculty in the Emory University Dance Program who helped choreograph the production.

"There are thousands and thousands of great songs you could consider," Anderson says.

The music and dance of classic male movie idols like **Fred Astaire** are featured in a new production from Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, 'Reel Men.'

Conductor Robert Strickland came on board to create arrangements for blended medleys of favorite songs the group wanted to squeeze in.

The audience should recognize tunes from their younger years, but with added spice, Duncan says.

"[The choreographers] have really added all these unique, fun and sometimes touching twists to what we do," he says.

A duet called "Sisters" includes "a little bit of drag," Duncan hints. "There are just so many fun moments. Just little bits of gay humor here and there."

The show is "light and fun" despite the "political arena of the day," he says. "There's always a political edge to it."

CHORUS OFFICIALS HOPE THE SHOW draws at least the same attendance as last year's "Babes in Boyland," which nearly sold out the 1,000-seat auditorium for both performances, Anderson says.

Variety shows like "Boyland" and "Reel Men" help AGMC bring in a more diverse audience, he says.

"It's not strictly a gay male classic music lover," Anderson says. "We see more straight people coming to see our productions."

Bringing in a broader audience advances "[the group's] mission of presenting a positive image of our community to the community at large," he adds.

The idea for "Reel Men" came up as the group joked about last year's "Boyland" theme and thought about making the theme a "men-type thing," Anderson says. The title led to the formation of the production.

AGMC's next venture is a preview of its upcoming performance at the Gay & Lesbian Association of Choruses' international choral festival in Montreal. The preview opens July 10 at the Ferst Center.

MORE INFO

Reel Men
June 18-19, 8 p.m.
Ferst Center for the Arts
349 Ferst Drive NW
www.agmchorus.org
Tickets: $20, $30 or $40

Southern Voice night
June 18
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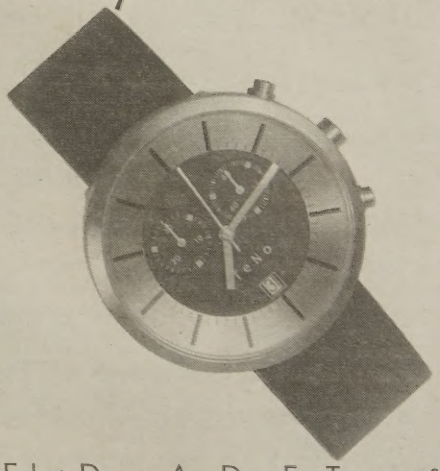

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FRIDAY JUNE 11 – **SUNDAY** JUNE 20

The 28th annual **Atlanta Film Festival** includes several gay-themed and gay-inclusive films, including the lesbian short 'Transit,' the gay men's romantic comedy 'Touch of Pink,' and gay actor Stephen Fry's directorial debut 'Bright Young Things.' Various locations. 404-352-4225, www.atlantafilmfestival.com

SUNDAY JUNE 13

Lesbian musician **Michelle Malone** appears with Emily Kate Boyd and Nina Camps for a 7 p.m. acoustic show at Red Light Café, 553 Amsterdam Ave. 404-874-7828, www.redlightcafe.com

TUESDAY JUNE 15

Gay actor-writer Charles Busch's campy melodrama satire '**Die, Mommie, Die!**' is screened at 8 p.m. on Movie & A Meal night at Red Chair Restaurant & Video Lounge, 551 Amsterdam Ave. 404-870-0532, www.redchairatlanta.com

Local public television station WPBA TV airs '**The Amasong Chorus: Singing Out**,' a documentary about lesbian music student Kristina Boerger founding a lesbian chorus in a small Illinois town, 11 p.m. on WPBA Channel 30

THURSDAY JUNE 17

Julie Andrews stars in the Academy Award-winning classic movie '**The Sound of Music**,' screened at dusk as part of Screen on the Green in Piedmont Park. 404-878-2600, www.turner.com/screenonthegreen

Author **Monique Troung** discusses and signs copies of her debut novel 'The Book of Salt,' which follows an Indochinese chef's journey to the Paris household of legendary lesbians Alice B. Toklas and Gertrude Stein, at 8 p.m. at Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse, 991 Piedmont Ave. 404-607-0082, www.outwritebooks.com

@ **To add a listing**, e-mail calendar@sovo.com, call 404-876-1819, ext. 32, or fax to 404-876-2709, attn: Van Gower. Entries should be submitted at least 14 days in advance.

nightlife calendar

FRIDAY JUNE 11

Armory. 'La Femme Royale' starring Savannah Leigh, Nicole Luv Dupree, Sophia McIntosh, Paula Sinclair, Tony Desario and Tina Devore, 11 p.m.-2 a.m. 404-881-9280.
Backstreet. Open 9 p.m.-7 a.m. Mon.–Sat. Charlie Brown's Cabaret, 11 p.m. 404-873-1986.
Blake's on the Park. Bingo with Bubba D. Licious, 7 p.m. Blue costume contest hosted by Ruby Redd, 11 p.m. 404-892-5786.
Blü. Dance party. 404-877-1221.
Buddies. 'Dumpster Divas', free cookout, 5 p.m. 404-634-5895.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop. 404-872-3025.
Burkhart's. Free pool, 4-7 p.m. 404-872-4403.
The Chaparral. Latin night, 10 p.m.-4 a.m. 404-634-3737.
Club M-Mage. R&B and hip-hop. Blackout night, doors open 10 p.m. 404-527-0085.
Club 708. Third Street Boys male exotic dancers, 10 p.m. Blackout Fridays. 404-874-8125.
Colours. Hip-hop and R&B night. 678-702-0872.
Felix's on the Square. Themed laid-back lounge night with David. 404-249-7899.
Heretic. 'Sweat,' 10 p.m.-4 a.m. 404-325-3061.
Jungle. Performances by Shabazz, Alexandria Martin and Raquel Lord. Doors open 9 p.m. No cover before midnight. 404-844-8800.
Le Buzz. Dancing. 770-424-1337.
Mary's. 'Danceteria,' 9 p.m. 404-624-4411.
Masquerade. 'KISS' Fridays indie and glam rock. Ages 18+. 404-577-8178.
Metro. 'Get WET with Jayne Russell' wet jockeys contest, midnight. 404-874-9869.
Model T. 'Divas of Illusion,' 11 p.m. 404-872-2209.
My Sisters' Room. Weekly live music and special events. Doors open 8 p.m. 404-370-1990.
The New Order. 404-874-8247.
The Oscars Atlanta. Cocktail hour and showtunes, 5-7 p.m. Best of the Oscars, 7-9 p.m. 'Martinis, Men & Music Videos,' 9 p.m. 404-874-7748.
The Phoenix. 404-892-7871.
Swinging Richards. '2-4-1 T-Shirt Review.' 404-352-0532.
Tripps. Happy Hour, 3-9 p.m. Disco night, 9 p.m. 404-724-0067.
Val's. Karaoke, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. 770-938-0567.
Woofs. 404-869-9422.

SATURDAY JUNE 12

Armory. 'La Femme Royale' with Tina Devore, Sophia McIntosh and Paula Sinclair, 11 p.m.-2 a.m.
Backstreet. Charlie Brown's Cabaret, 11 p.m.
Blake's on the Park. 'Let's Make A Diva Deal!' game hosted by Jealousé, 11 p.m.
Blü. Dance party. Doors open 11 p.m.
The Breaking Point. New cabaret show and drag fights, 10:30 p.m.
Buddies. 'Gladiators of Glamour' with Peg, Regina Ryan and guests, 10 p.m.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop.
Club M-Mage. R&B and hip-hop. House night, doors open 10 p.m.
Colours. Male revue with original Men of Jaguar, 11:30 p.m.
Felix's on the Square. Laid-back lounge night with David.
Jungle. Performances by Shabazz, Alexandria Martin and Raquel Lord. Doors open 9 p.m. No cover before midnight.
Le Buzz. 'Girlzz of LeBuzz' drag show, 11 p.m.
Masquerade. 'SIN' erotic and industrial night, 10 p.m.-3 a.m. Ages 18+.
Metro. 'Las Bugambilias' Latin revue with Italia Franco, Monica Botas, and Rebecca Duvall, midnight.
Model T. 'Model Teez Girlz' drag show, 11 p.m.
The Oscars Atlanta. 'Martinis, Men & Music Videos,' 9 p.m.
Swinging Richards. '2-4-1 T-Shirt Review.'
Traxx. Hip-hop, 10 p.m. Male revue show, third floor, midnight. 404-681-4422.
Tripps. Blackout party, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

SUNDAY JUNE 13

Armory. 'Flower Power' weekly T-dance with food, drinks, entertainment and giveaways. No cover. 2-8 p.m.
Blake's on the Park. Blake's Big Time Drag Revue. 9:30 p.m.
Buddies. Morticia DeVille and the Atlanta Gospel Hour, free cookout, 6 p.m.
Bulldogs. 'SunTea' wet and wild party.
Burkhart's. Dinner menu, 4:30-7:30 p.m. The Armorettes! Infamous Camp Drag Queens of the South, 9 p.m.
The Chaparral. 'Hip-Hop Sunday,' 10 p.m.
Club 708. Social night, open until midnight.
Heretic. 'Sweat' T-dance and frozen drinks on the patio, 6 p.m.-midnight. No cover.
Hoedowns. Line-dance lessons, 5-6 p.m. Cabaret and revue, 6 p.m. 404-876-0001.
Model T. Drag show, 10 p.m.
My Sisters' Room. 'The L Word' repeat episode, 9 p.m. New episode, 10 p.m.
Red Chair. T-dance on the patio, 4:30 p.m. 'Red Chair Revue' with Bubba D. Licious and guests, 8 p.m. 404-870-0532.

MONDAY JUNE 14

Armory. Sophia McIntosh variety show, 10 p.m.
Blake's on the Park. 'Blake's Neighborhood Party' free buffet, 5-8 p.m. 'Drag Races' contest hosted by Alexandria Martin, 11 p.m.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop.
Club 708. Third Street Boys male exotic dancers, 10 p.m.
Colours. Male revue talent night, 11:30 p.m.
Eagle. Free pool. 404-873-2453.
Joe's on Juniper. Music trivia, 8-10 p.m. 404-875-6634.
Metro. Industry night, 10 p.m.
Nickiemoto's. Dragamaki with Bubba D. Licious, Martina Diamante and weekly guests. 8:45 p.m. 404-253-2010.
The Oscars Atlanta. Service industry night, 9 p.m.
Traxx. 'Stars of the Century' female illusion show, doors open 10:30 p.m.
Tripps. Happy Hour, 3-9 p.m.

TUESDAY JUNE 15

Armory. Drag show, 10:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.
The Breaking Point. Free pool and open tournaments with cash prizes, 8 p.m.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop.
Club 708. 'Oldies & Goodies' night, '70s and '80s hip-hop and R&B, 10 p.m.
Colours. Customer-appreciation night, 8 p.m.
Dragonfly. 18-and-up gay club night. Open bar 10-11 p.m. 21 to drink. 404-875-7473.
Hoedowns. Free dance lessons, 8 p.m.
Joe's on Juniper. 'Trivia Challenge,' 8-10 p.m.
Mary's. Mary-oke, 10 p.m.
Metro. Latin house music, 10 p.m.
Miss Q's. Pool leagues. 404-875-6255.
Red Chair. Homestyle dinner and movie, 7:30 p.m.
Swinging Richards. No cover before 10 p.m.
Traxx. 'Thugged-Out Tuesday Night' hip-hop, 11 p.m.
Tripps. Happy Hour, 3-9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 16

Backstreet. 'Spotlight' talent contest hosted by Juan Cezar and Monica Van Pelt, 1 a.m.
Blake's on the Park. 'The Lust & The Bust' with Lena Lust, Shawnna Brooks and Alexandria Martin, 11 p.m.
The Breaking Point. Karaoke jackpot for cash.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop.
The Chaparral. 'Flamin'-Hot Wednesdays' with hot bods, go-go boys and contests.
Club M-Mage. R&B and hip-hop. Ladies' night, doors open 9 p.m.
Club 708. Open-mike night, 10 p.m. Mini-ball drag show, 2 a.m.
Colours. Male revue with original Men of Jaguar, 11:30 p.m.
Compound. 'Impulse' gay night. Doors open 9 p.m. 404-872-4621.
Heretic. 'Boys' Night Out' dress code party, 10 p.m.
Hoedowns. Free dance lessons, 8 p.m.
Jungle. 'Chico de la Jungle' Latin night. Doors open 9 p.m.
Le Buzz. 'Girlzz of LeBuzz,' 10 p.m. Menergy dancers, 11 p.m.
Metro. 'Urban Spin' R&B and old school, 10 p.m. Maxine Blue's 'Class, Ass & Pizzazz' show starring Feleshia Sapphire, Yanae Van Michaels, and guests, 11:30 p.m.
Midtown Saloon & Grill. Open-mike night, 8 p.m.
Model T. Movie night, midnight.
Oscars. Comedy night, 9 p.m.
Red Chair. Ladies' night.
Swinging Richards. No cover before 10 p.m.
Tripps. Happy Hour, 3-9 p.m.
Vision. 'Skin and Sin Wednesdays,' open bar, 10-11 p.m. 404-874-4460.
WETbar. 'Femme-tini' ladies' night.

THURSDAY JUNE 17

Backstreet. Charlie Brown's Cabaret, midnight.
Bulldogs. Old-school, NYC and Chicago house, R&B and hip-hop.
Burkhart's. Kitty LeClaw's Meow Mix with Martina Diamante, Savannah Lee and Alicia Kelly. 11:30 p.m.
Club M-Mage. R&B and hip-hop. Doors open 9 p.m.
Club Rio. 'Thursday Extravaganza' gay night and drag show. No cover. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Gainesville. 770-654-3949, rioclub@charter.net
Club 708. 'Trade Thursdays' plus Third Street Boys male exotic dancers, 10 p.m.
Colours. 'Bad Boy Thursday,' 8 p.m.
Eagle. Underwear party, 10 p.m.
Heretic. 'Experience Rapture' dance party, 10 p.m.
Hoedowns. Ladies' night. Free line-dance lessons, 8 p.m.
Le Buzz. 'Court of Kings' drag kings, 10 p.m.
Mary's. 'Beat Surrender,' 9:30 p.m.
Masquerade. '80s night new-wave and alternative in Purgatory, 10 p.m.-3 a.m. Ages 18+.
Metro. Latin pop music, 10 p.m. 'Latin Connection' with Alexis Troncoso and guests, midnight.
Model T. Open-mike, 8 p.m. Drag show, 11 p.m.
My Sisters' Room. Alternating open-mike and singer-songwriter nights. Open-mike sign-ups, 7 p.m. Doors open 8 p.m.
The New Order. Open-mike night, 8 p.m.
The Oscars Atlanta. Pure energy, pure video, 9 p.m.
Red Chair. College night: 18 to party, 21 to drink all night.
Tripps. Happy Hour, 3-9 p.m. Ciceresha & Company male revue, 10 p.m.
WETbar. Threesome Thursdays go-go boys and drink specials.

@ To add a listing, e-mail **calendar@sovo.com,** call 404-876-1819, ext. 32, or fax to 404-876-2709, attn: Van Gower. Entries should be submitted at least 14 days in advance.

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Thousands of gay travelers from around the world arrived in Orlando last week for Gay Days, which has ballooned in attendance over the last decade. From a few friends in red shirts enjoying Walt Disney World in 1991, Gay Days has become the Granddaddy of all gay theme park events. Events this year, which ran June 1-7, included fun in the park and dance parties for men and women. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood)

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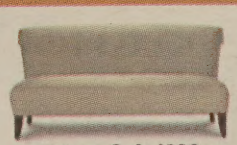

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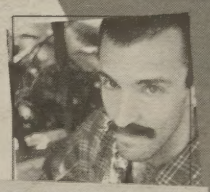
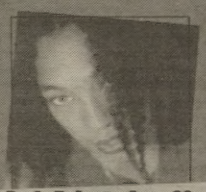
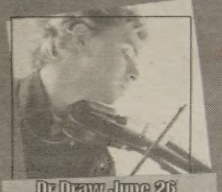
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra June 25

Janis Ian June 26


Mark Weigle June 27


Doria Roberts June 26


Dr Draw June 26

Friday June 25
6-11pm

The Vigil at PRIDE
6:30 Washintgton Mutual Stage
Commitment Ceremony
8:00 Sheraton Colony Square
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
8:00 Coca-Cola Stage
The PRIDE Prom
8:00 Magnolia Hall

Saturday June 26
11am-11pm

Dyke March
6:00 Charles Allen Gate
VIP Party "by invitation only"
6:30 Magnolia Hall
Doria Roberts
7:30 Coca Cola Stage
Janis Ian
8:30 Coca Cola Stage
Dr Draw
9:30 Coca Cola Stage

Sunday June 27
11am-11pm
The PRIDE Parade
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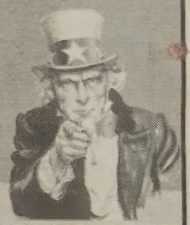
1:00PM Kick Off-
MARTA Civic Center Station
assembly begins 10:30
Mark Weigle
3:30 Coca Cola Stage
Starlight Cabaret
8:30 Coca Cola Stage



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dining MISTI HEWATT

In community known for classic homes, **Patio Inman Park** provides menu filled with classic flavors, generous plates.

Another Inman Park classic

WHEN RUSTY UMPENHOUR MOVED into Inman Park, he noticed that the area boasted beautiful houses and warm neighbors. But the quaint in-town Atlanta community was missing a good restaurant.

Partnering with Kimberly Reaves, Umpenhour decided to meet the need, and the duo opened Patio Inman Park in 2002.

From the flavors to the friendly service and glorious patio, Umpenhour and Reeves crafted a restaurant that captures the essence of Inman Park in gustatory pleasures.

Many Atlanta restaurants delight in serving small portions and exotic tastes — and there are some that pull it off beautifully. But Patio triumphs with hearty servings and wholesome flavors.

If one word were chosen to describe the Patio experience, it would be "warm."

This is the place to go to recapture the meals of yesteryear's pleasant childhood experiences — culinary and otherwise.

The interior is somewhat dull. With largely unadorned walls, wooden floors and an expansive space, the dining area lacks the coziness of a Manhattan joint.

The most exciting interior feature is the bar. It is cozy and punctuated by a series of bright red lamps hanging from the ceiling. They look like fresh cherries dangling above the bar.

The lamps are interesting, but dining inside is not recommended. The restaurant's piece de resistance, as one might guess, is the patio. And it is beautiful.

THE MENU OFFERS A VARIETY OF moderately priced options with a selection of pizzas, pastas and American classics. The most expensive entrée is the lamb chops at $23.

For starters, I choose the pancetta wrapped shrimp and a cream-based asparagus and shitake soup. The opening of the meal is not spectacular.

Many Atlanta restaurants delight in serving small portions and exotic tastes — and there are some that pull it off beautifully.

The first tastes are the table bread (triangular slices of pita topped with parmesan) and the shrimp. Both are salty. The pancetta overpowers the shrimp, which are a little tough.

The dish leaves me pondering the superiority of bacon wrapped scallops. Perhaps I should have tried one of the beautiful salads.

The asparagus and shitake soup is the first indication of the warm and robust tastes that reflect the overall quality of Patio. The soup is not overdone with cream, and the asparagus and mushrooms are not pureed to oblivion. With a generous bowl, this soup is enough for a small meal.

But don't stop with soup. The menu offers a variety of pizzas and pastas, but I choose classic American selections.

Options include osso bucco (braised veal shank) and seared duck, but I sample the lamb chops and pork tenderloin. The entrees are liberal platefuls worthy of a Thanksgiving dinner.

The portions are so generous, some couples might decide to share an entrée.

The quality of the meat is superb. Both the lamb and the pork tenderloin are tender, fresh and discreetly seasoned. The lamb is grilled with rosemary, cracked black pepper and salt. The simple seasonings augment the natural flavor of the meat.

The Marsala sauce, featured with the pork loin, is a little rich. A basic gravy might be preferable, but the dish is still delectable.

The sides do not dare to be different, and that is perfect. Mashed sweet and garlic potatoes and sautéed spinach and green beans are all well-executed, lingering with the simple taste of a home-cooked meal.

DESSERTS INCLUDE A CRÈME brulee and the intimidating "Chocolate Cookie Coma." As a native Georgian, I have to sample the peach cobbler. Instead of a bread crust, the cobbler is served with granola on top of warm peaches and topped with cinnamon ice cream.

As I eat, the ice cream slowly melts, and the dish transforms into what can be best described as a sinful, delicious morning cereal.

If Inman Park was missing a solid restaurant serving savory classics, the need is now met, and the place is sure to only get better over time.

FOOD FILE

PATIO INMAN PARK

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Food: ★★★½☆
Service: ★★★★☆
Comfort & Aesthetics: ★★★½☆
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Scene: ★★★★☆

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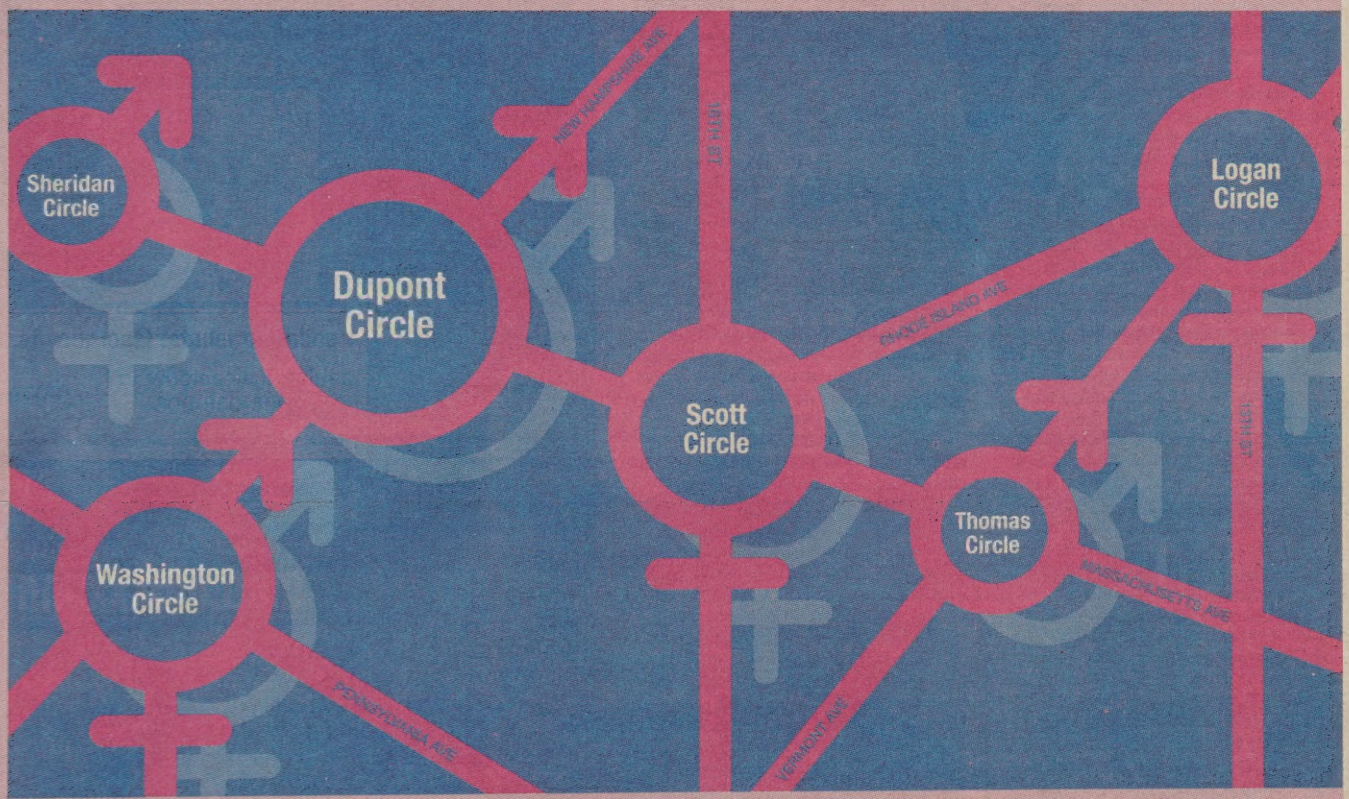

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Another gay affair

Hugh Jackman provided a glimpse of his Tony-winning character, late gay songwriter Peter Allen in 'The Boy from Oz,' and simultaneously gave Sarah Jessica Parker a dance lesson during the 2004 Tony Awards telecast.

THERE WAS LITTLE SURPRISE Sunday when the 58th annual Tony Awards telecast from Radio City Music Hall was chock full of gay moments, gay winners — and alas, gay losers.

After all, the annual CBS airing is mostly about musical theater, and everyone knows that Broadway is a haven for those fabulously entertaining homosexuals.

"It's not TV; it's the Tony Awards," cooed host Hugh Jackman in a recap of events about halfway through the show.

Jackman was part of some of the telecast's gayest moments. He brought down the house with his over-the-top "Not the Boy Next Door" from "The Boy from Oz," in which he plays gay songwriter Peter Allen.

Jackman later claimed the award for Best Lead Actor in a Musical over gay actor John Tartaglia in "Avenue Q" and Euan Morton's portrayal of Boy George in "Taboo."

During his number from "Oz," Jackman wore a leopard-print shirt and belt with gold lame pants, joking that Radio City featured one of the "biggest organs in the world."

"What more could a boy ask for?" he quipped.

Later in the number, he coaxed actress Sarah Jessica Parker onstage for an impromptu dirty dancing lesson. When Parker returned to the stage as a presenter with gay actor Nathan Lane, she ribbed Lane about the dance with Jackman.

"Jealous?" she asked.

"He just won't return my calls," Lane answered.

Jackman's good looks were the butt of other gay jibes. Gay puppet Rod from Best Musical winner "Avenue Q" hit on Jackman during one bit and even stole a kiss. Jackman reacted with a comment to his wife in the audience.

"Deb, if I go to the 'Avenue Q' party, you'll know why," he said.

THE BIG WINNERS OF THE NIGHT were the transgender show "I Am My Own Wife" which won Best Play, and "Avenue Q" for Best Musical.

"Wife," which also took home the Pulitzer Prize for Drama earlier this year, also garnered the hard-won Best Lead Actor in a Play award for Jefferson Mays as a real-life crossdresser.

Gay director Moises Kaufman was the only nominee for "Wife" that didn't win. That award went to Jack O'Brien for "Henry IV."

When accepting the Best Play award for "Wife," gay writer Doug Wright gave "all my love to Clem," and the producer took the opportunity to say that the play's off-center character is poignant in a time when some U.S. citizens are "denied the ultimate right to marry."

"Avenue Q" also won Best Original Score for debut writers Robert Lopez and Jeff Marx, as well as Best Book of a Musical for Jeff Whitty. Marx thanked "my parents and my boyfriend."

Whitty, who was given the award by longtime gay playwright and actor Harvey Fierstein, also followed recognition of his parents with "Steve, I love you. You're the other best thing to happen to me this year."

Lopez and Marx beat out Boy George for "Taboo" and gay playwright Tony Kushner's "Caroline, or Change" for their prize.

BEST REVIVAL OF A MUSICAL WENT to gay songwriter Stephen Sondheim's "Assassins." In that show, gay actor Dennis O'Hare lost Best Featured Actor in a Musical to his castmate, Michael Cerveris, who also beat out Raul Esparza in "Taboo."

Best Direction of a Musical also went to Sondheim's "Assassins." Joe Manello beat out gay directors George C. Wolfe and Jason Moore for the trophy.

"Wicked," a musical prequel to "The Wizard of Oz," was favored in several of the top categories. But the only major prize the show took home went to Idina Menzel for Best Leading Actress in a Musical.

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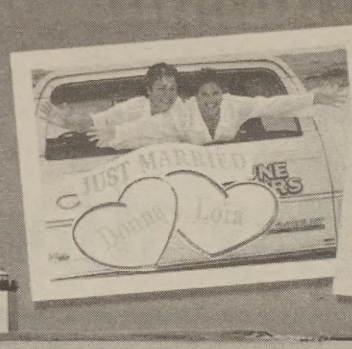

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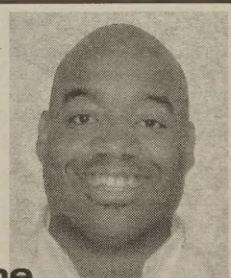

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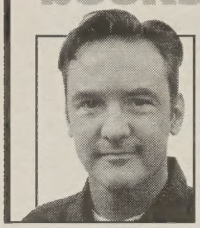


Annual gay book awards recognize 'excitement, mission and purpose' in **fiction and non-fiction** works.

Literary luminaries

GAY AUTHORS AND LITERATI GATHered in anticipation in Chicago June 3 for the 16th Annual Lambda Literary awards ceremony to recognize excellence in fiction and non-fiction work on gay, lesbian and transgender topics that were published in 2003.

The awards are sponsored each year by the Lambda Literary Foundation, which also publishes the Lambda Book Report and the James White Review.

"The awards went very well this year," says Jim Marks, executive director of Lambda. "It was a very meaningful evening displaying the energy, excitement, mission and purpose of our community's literary work."

Some 100 finalists were selected from 350 titles nominated by editors and agents. Awards went out in 20 categories.

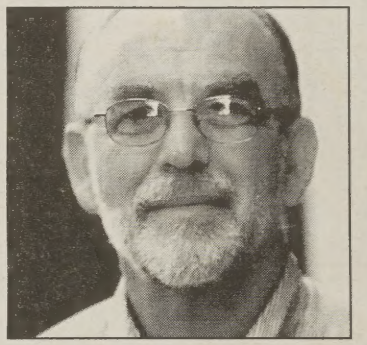
The Lesbian Fiction category saw stiff competition, but the award ultimately went to Nina Revoyr for "Southland," a look at the intersections of race and class in Los Angeles. In another nod to big city life, the top prize in Gay Men's Fiction went to Christopher Bram for his gay-inclusive novel "Lives of the Circus Animals," the story of Broadway theater wonks in New York City.

CONTROVERSY IN THE AWARDS RACE reared its ugly head in February as finalists were announced in the Transgender/Gender-queer category. After a year's worth of mixed reviews, proponents and critics clamored to be heard when "The Man Who Would Be Queen" by Michael J. Bailey became a finalist.

Some critics consider the book to set back transgender studies with stereotyping in its anecdotal analysis of men who experience gender variance.

The finalist committee of 14 gay bookstore owners and editors from across the country — including Sara Look, one of the owners of Atlanta's Charis Books & More, and Philip Rafshoon, owner of Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse — bounced the book off of and back onto the list of nominees.

But the controversy didn't ultimately affect the category's outcome. The "Lammy" went to Jennifer Finney Boylan for her widely well received personal account of transition in "She's Not There."



Jim Marks, executive director of the Lambda Literary Foundation, said this year's 'Lammy' winners represent the wide scope of books offered on gay topics.

ATLANTA JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR Elliott Mackle was a finalist in the Gay Men's Mystery Category. His story of love between two men in 1940's Florida was beat out by John Morgan Wilson's "Blind Eye." The Lesbian Mystery award went to Elizabeth Sims for "Damn Straight."

In other fiction races, the LGBT Romance category was taken by Michael Thomas Ford's "Last Summer" and Karin Kallmaker's "Maybe Next Time." The LGBT Drama award went to Brian Drader for "Prok," and the LGBT Erotica prize was claimed by Tristan Taormino for "Best Lesbian Erotica 2004."

"Pulp Friction" by Michael Bronski won the Fiction Anthology category.

Popular lesbian cartoonist Alison Bechdel won the Humor category for her compilation book "Dykes and Sundry Other Carbon-Based Life-Forms to Watch Out for." The Children/Young Adult prize was claimed by David Levithan for "Boy Meets Boy." "Necrologue," edited by England's Helen Sandler, won the Science Fiction/Fantasy/Horror award.

"The Dirt She Ate," by Minnie Bruce Pratt won the Lesbian Poetry award, and the Gay Men's Poetry prize went to Henri Cole for "Middle Earth."

In non-fiction categories, Bob Guter and Robert Killacky edited the winning "Queer Crips" in the Anthology category. Andrew Wilson took home the Lammy for LGBT Biography with "Beautiful Shadow," and Lillian Faderman won the LGBT Memoir/Autobiography award for "Naked in the Promised Land."

The award for LGBT Studies went to "Time on Two Crosses."

MORE INFO

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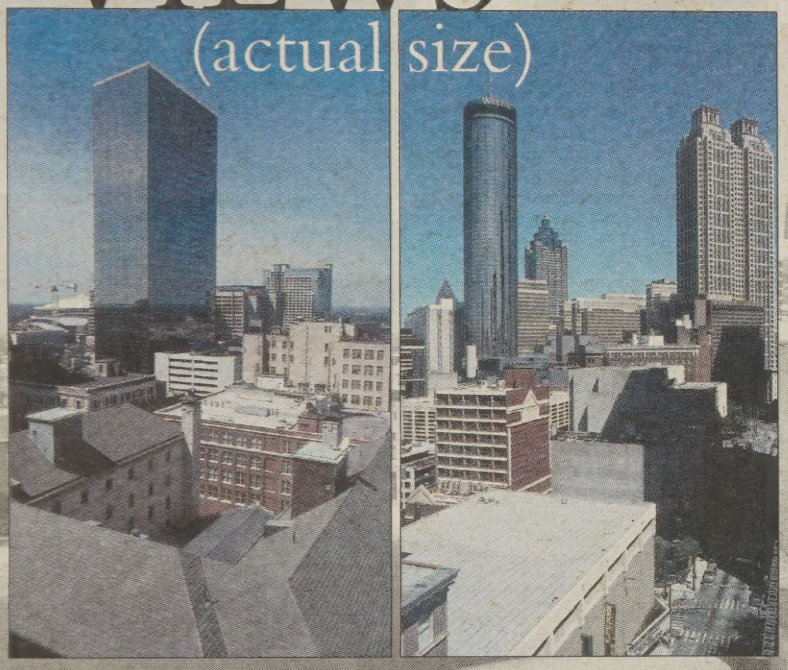

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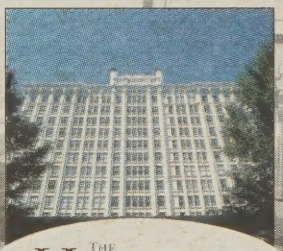

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Venerable play is 'all about family,' actors say

LA CAGE continued from Page 39

Ironically, Goff already had the performer in mind when he began planning the show, even before he found his director.

For Wofford, "La Cage Aux Folles" marks a first for him as well — playing a gay man. He laughs that a few of his friends might be surprised.

"A lot of my friends tell me that I'm atypical; they tell me I'm a metrosexual," Wof-ford says. "No, I'm not. I'm just cultured."

ONE POINT THE SHOW'S PRINCIPALS agree on is that behind the costumes and splashy numbers, "La Cage" has an underlying theme.

"It's all about love — the love between these two men, the love of a child and his father, the love between these two and the community they have built for themselves," Wright says.

"There is so much depth and tenderness here. Yes, it is a splashy musical, but it has a heart. These two guys are funny, but they are so sympathetic. You really love these two because they are so full of love for each other and the people in their life."

Deavours agrees.

"This show is all about family," he says. "The lesson it teaches is so valuable. We can't change who our relatives are but we can certainly change our family. In this show, Georges and Albin have this wonderful extended family that extends out to their community."

Critics of 'La Cage Aux Folles" say the show is dated and the Albin character is a stereotype. Deavours scoffs at that suggestion.

"Do you know why stereotypes exist?" he asks. "Because these kinds of people do exist. ... Whether its 'La Cage Aux Folles' or 'Dangerous Liaisons,' they're all generalizations. Albin is a very strong character. He has made a life out of being a drag queen. He gives it all he has — to him it's not a phony life. He's not just a cross-dresser; it's a real lifestyle to him."

Deavours says that gay audiences have the ability to look at characters like Albin and laugh, but also take him for who he is.

"Within our community, we can make jokes," he says. " I think the great thing about gays is that we can laugh at ourselves. We've learned to protect ourselves by making jokes. But we can be serious when we have to be and take others seriously."

Wright says that the musical's closing number embodies that.

"When Albin sings "I Am Who I Am' at the end, I must say, that always gets to me, because it's so important that this character remains true to himself," he says.

MORE INFO

'La Cage Aux Folles'
Through July 11
Neighborhood Playhouse
430 W. Trinity Place, Decatur
404- 373-5311

MANY VIEWERS AND CRITICS HAILED Williams and Lane as the quintessential couple in the story, that they hit the mark as lovers onscreen. But Goff says there is room for other interpretations.

"I think that 'The Birdcage' is much closer to the original French film than the musical," Goff says. "Most everyone agrees that Robin Williams and Nathan Lane are terrific in the movie, but they are not necessarily definitive. Darrell and George are different. I believe that our couple is a lot sweeter, and I think these have a bit more substance."

"La Cage Aux Folles" marks another gay show in a season already full of local gay productions — "Bent," "What the Butler Saw," as well as "Two Queens and a Castle," "Love! Valour! Compassion!" and many more, including last week's "Rent."

"I'm glad that we can be a part of all the gay shows that are around right now," Goff says. "It's an exciting time. It's also a great opportunity; what's encouraging to me about all the current fare is that there are some new voices being heard in addition to the other big-name shows."

The farcical road taken in 'La Cage Aux Folles' ultimately leads most of the cast to go incognito as drag queens.

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dish There's a Fine Line Between Telling the Truth and Talking Trash

Piedmont Park promo does drag, Lady Bunny won't kill chickens, **David** and **Dietrich** get resuscitated lives.

Atlanta's 'Common Ground'

ALLRIGHT FOR LOCAL DRAG DIVAS **RUBY REDD** and **BRITNEY POWERS**! The duo made the director's cut of a new promotional film from the Piedmont Park Conservancy, the organization responsible for restoration and preservation of the park.

The two-minute feature, which is shown before each of this summer's Screen on the Green features in the Piedmont Park meadow, shows famous Atlanta faces lip-syncing to the Violent Femmes' tune "Blister in the Sun."

In addition to a campy Redd and Powers, the film also features WSB anchor **MONICA KAUFMAN**, CNN's **ROBIN MEADE**, Grammy nominee **SHAWN MULLINS** and iconic local stripper **BLONDIE** from the Clermont Lounge.

A variety of the park's everyday bikers, dog walkers, kids and skaters also join the fun to highlight the park's diverse draw. Producers of the promo say it is part of a $35 million effort since 1995 to re-establish the park as Atlanta's "Common Ground."

A shot from a new promo film by the Piedmont Park Conservancy features Atlanta drag personalities **Britney Powers** (left) and **Ruby Redd** lip-syncing to the '80s hit 'Blister in the Sun.'

Kicking the bucket

Some might say that drag can be cruel, but Wigstock founder and drag doyenne **LADY BUNNY** won't allow cruelty to chickens.

Lady Bunny

The cross-dressing comedian, who was recently seen on "Sex & the City" and in **BRITNEY SPEARS**'s MTV special, has signed up with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals to protest **KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN**.

PETA says that the company treats the chickens — that later become so finger-licking good — cruelly, by using a hurtful de-beaking process and scalding them while they're still alive.

Lady Bunny and PETA unveiled a new ad campaign last week that targets the company and leads viewers to www.KentuckyFriedCruelty.com.

Celebrities such as hip-hop mogul **RUSSELL SIMMONS, PAMELA ANDERSON, PAUL MCCARTNEY, RICHARD PRYOR** and civil rights advocate **DICK GREGORY** have also spoken out against KFC.

Dirty David

That **DAVID** is certainly one dirty boy. And for a change, we don't mean **DAVID GEST**, but rather Michelangelo's famous statue — a gay icon and one of the world's oldest testaments to male beauty, which stands in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, Italy.

David recently got some enhancements, the New York Times reports. No, not the kind of "male" enhancement that junk e-mail promises.

On May 24, the statue's new look was unveiled, after a $500,000 restoration and cleaning.

David

"I would call the result 'less gray,' but I hope it's not too white," restorer Cinzia Parnigoni told the Times. She used distilled water applied through a compress to clean the statue before completely restoring parts of it that suffered damage in its 500-year history.

In 1527, when David stood outdoors in the Piazza della Signoria, the statue's left arm was broken during a riot and reattached with a metal bar and a mixture of lime and sand. That was replaced with fresh plaster, rendering the break imperceptible.

In 1991, an unstable artist wielding a hammer smashed a toe on David's left foot, which had to be replaced.

Playing a diva

Oscar winner **GWYNETH PALTROW** signed on to produce and possibly star in a movie about the life of screen legend **MARLENE DIETRICH**, Reuters reports. After becoming famous as a cross-dressing singer in the film "Blue Angel," the German-born Dietrich was reported to have had affairs with both men and women.

Paltrow and her producing partners persuaded DreamWorks SKG to buy the rights to the book "Marlene Dietrich" by the late film star's daughter, Maria Riva, but no production schedule has been set.

Dietrich died a recluse in 1992 at age 90.

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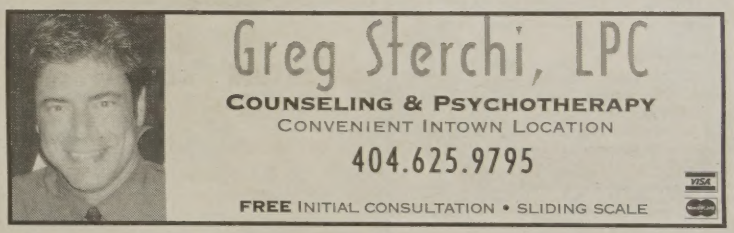

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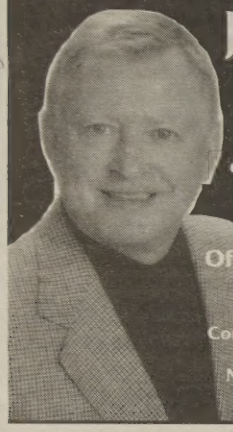

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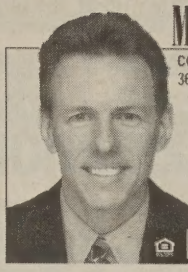

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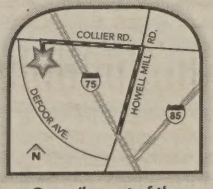

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Ready to sizzle? You'll look hot in a **cool convertible**. The hard part is choosing the best one.

Toyota Solara

Ragtop roundup

TIME TO BELLY UP TO THE BAR — A sun-drenched sandbar, that is. But while the best way to your local gay beach is via a ragin' ragtop, which one to choose?

There are more than 50 chop-top chariots out there, ranging from $21,000 to a fat $450,000.

Most are two-seaters, but others are built for four — or so they say (sit in back to be sure). Trunk space is usually nil, which means no forays to Costco.

But amenities can be plenty, such as heated leather seats, power folding tops that stow in seconds and even steering-wheel audio controls.

And safety is a given, with antilock brakes, side airbags and pop-up roll bars on many models.

So how about some style to go with all that substance? Look no further than the five head-turners below. Most just hit dealer showrooms, which can only mean that they — and you — will stay trés trendy for years to come.

Toyota Solara

$30,000
Speed (0-60 mph): 7.1 seconds
Top design: Power-operated cloth top (heated window)
Power top lowers in: 8.6 seconds

LIKE THINGS VERSATILE? THIS LATEST redo of Toyota's midsize four-seater feels both taut and cushy — in a good way. It's also spacious, with more cargo space (12 cubic feet) than most ragtops and room for even Olympic-sized drivers.

Choose from two engines: a tepid four-cylinder (which gets a mean 33 mpg on the highway) or the robust V6 (28 mpg). There are also three trim levels available: base, sport and luxury.

Each model is full of standard gear, like power windows/locks/mirrors, keyless entry, steering-wheel audio controls and trip computer.

If "more" is your mantra, there's optional stability/traction control, power driver seat and 6-disc changer for all those beach-party CDs.

Chrysler Crossfire

$35,000
Speed (0-60 mph): 6.9 seconds
Top design: Power-operated cloth top (heated window)
Power top lowers in: 22 seconds

Chrysler Crossfire

BUILDING ON LAST YEAR'S CROSSfire buzz, Chrysler whipped up a glitzy two-seat soft top that handles better, looks better and has more headroom than its hardtop cousin. It's also a scream to drive, thanks to a 215-horsepower V6 on a rather lightweight (3,140 pounds) frame.

A nifty tail spoiler rises at speeds above 60 mph. And the two-toned seats are form fitting for drivers of all sizes. But fashionistas beware: Trunk space is a measly 3.6 cubic feet with the top down.

Luckily, Chrysler offers a slick three-piece fitted luggage set as an option.

Lotus Elise

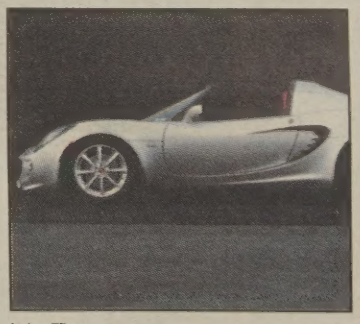
$45,000
Speed (0-60 mph): 4.8 seconds
Top design: Roof panel (optional)
Top lowers in: A few snaps and a heave-ho

PROVING THAT BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS better, this 1,975-pound imp is smaller and lighter than a Mazda Miata. Such SlimFast engineering makes the Elise one of the quickest cars in the world.

Drivers up to 6 feet 3 inches tall won't have a problem fitting in the sturdy, racing-inspired cockpit. But shoulder room can be tight — as can getting in and out with the top on.

Pricey options include leather seats, power windows, a sportier suspension and a Blaupunkt stereo. But except for the $1,475 roof panel for all-weather driving, it's hipper to ride this Matchbox monster as barebones as possible.

Please see **CONVERTIBLES** on **Page 63**



Lotus Elise

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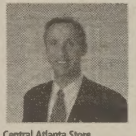

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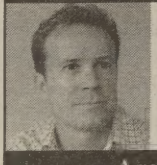

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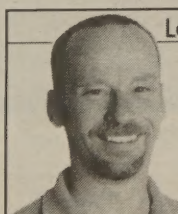

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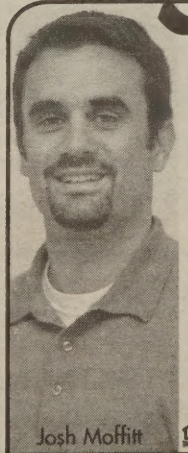

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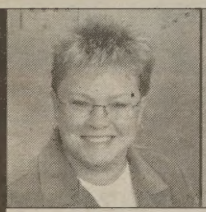

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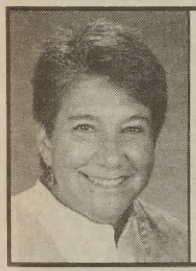

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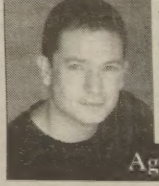

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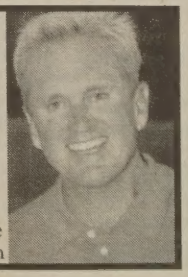

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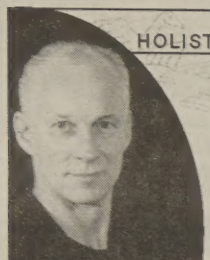

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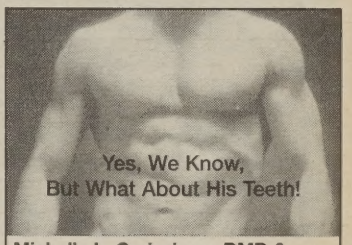

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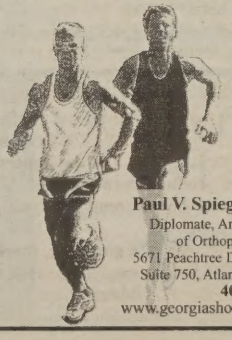
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CONVERTIBLES, continued from Page 59

Mercedes SLK350

$55,000
Speed (0-60 mph): 5.6 seconds
Top design: Power-operated steel hardtop (glass window)
Top lowers in: 22 seconds

Mercedes SLK350

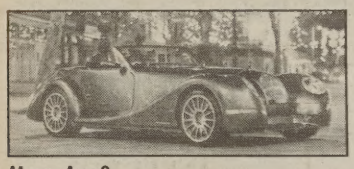
FROM ITS BUBBLE-BUTT TRUNK TO the swanky, wide-mouthed grille complete with overly showy three-pointed star, this redone ragtop puts other German fare to shame.

There's more luxury inside than on the Queen Mary II, including headrests that blow warm air onto your head and neck during cold-weather jaunts. And steering-wheel buttons allow you to shift the new 7-speed automatic transmission. A 6-speed manual also is available.

On sale in September, the SLK's 268-horsepower V6 is blazingly fast. But for even more moxie, a heart-pounding V8 arrives in November.

Morgan Aero 8

$100,000
Speed (0-60 mph): 4.9 seconds
Top design: Manual cloth top or hardtop (both with glass window)
Top lowers in: Faster than kicking a soccer goal



Morgan Aero 8

They may not bend it like Beckham, but Morgans sure are built like the soccer star: Sporty, posh and, well, full of spice. There's leather and wood all over. And with swooping side panels, flared fenders, and a low-slung hood that stretches for blocks, the Brit-built Aero 8 looks like a Cruella De Vil creation.

Made mainly of aluminum with a BMW engine, the 2,200-pound two-seater is fast, fuel-efficient and the lightest V8-powered production car around. All windows (even the rear one) are electronically heated.

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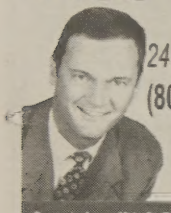

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MIDCITY LOFTS DEAL! Midtown / Technology Square. 1 BR, 1 BA. Deeded garage parking, upgrades, skyline view. Rooftop pool, lounge, gym. $210,000. Brian Frasier, RE/AX (404) 422-6050 www.realtorfrasier.com

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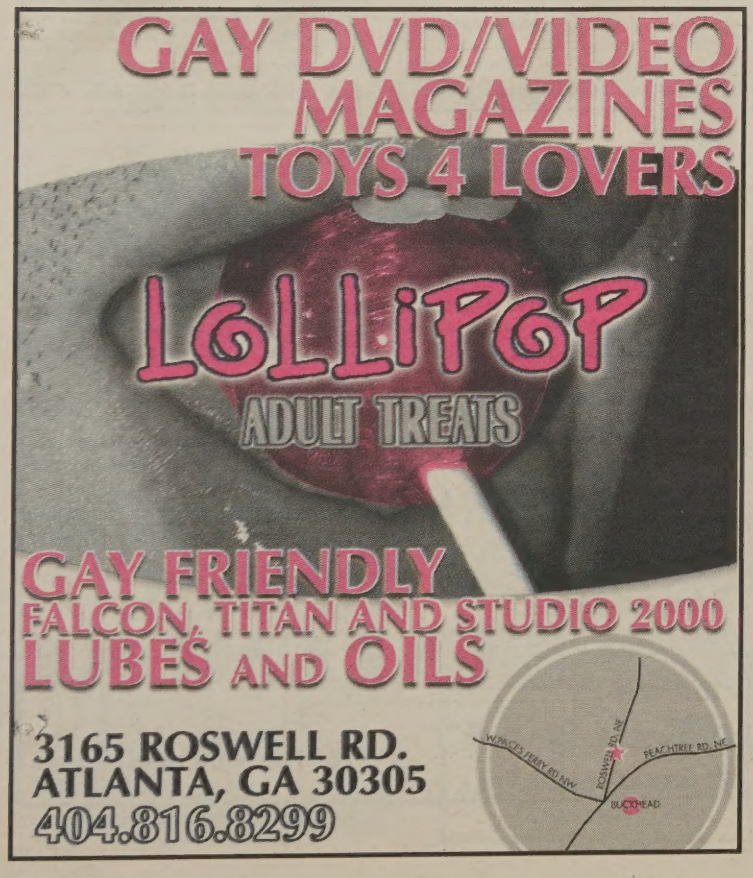

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MIDTOWN / GA. TECH 2 BR, 2 BA amazing loft-style condo in old school building. Complete renovation. 14' ceilings, huge windows. Granite, stainless, hrdwds, maple cabinets, 2 parking spaces, pool, the works! $1,360/mo. Avail 7/1. (404) 518-5492

MIDTOWN / PIEDMONT PARK 2 BR, 2 BA Condo on 13th. Gated covered parking, pool, fitness center, hrdwds. $1,400/mo incl water/cable. Avail 7/1. (770) 355-7452 or (404) 892-0794

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VA HIGHLANDS - FREE 1ST MONTH'S RENT
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VA HIGHLANDS Gorgeous corner studio loft. Lots of windows. Lge balcony w/city skyline view. All appls including W/D. Covered park'g. Avail July 1st. $1,100/mo. (404) 372-8746.

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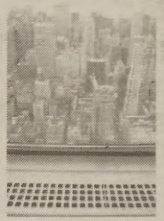

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AVONDALE / I-285 GM sharing large 4 BR, 2.5 BA house. CATV, DSL, garage, fenced back yard. Pets OK. Non-smoker only. $450/mo incl utils. Refs & dep req'd. Call Gary (404) 294-9061 or e-mail to hond@mindspring.com

AVONDALE ESTATES Prof GM & his dog, looking for responsible GM or GF to share 4 BR, 2 BA house w/ garage. Priv BA, CATV, fenced back yard. No smoke/drugs. $550/mo incl utils. Refs & dep req'd. Call (404) 284-8001

BROOKHAVEN / CLAIRMONT GF to share 3 BR, 1.5 BA House. Non-smoker, 12 step friendly. $450/mo + 1/2 utils. Call (770) 455-3756

BUCKHEAD / MIDTOWN GM to share 3 BR, 2.5 BA TH, WD, convenient location, no pets. $475/mo incl utils. Call Ken (404) 634-7563 after 6pm.

DECATUR Share lrg split lvl hse w/GWM. Your own BR/BA. $450/mo, utils incl. Non-smoker. Avail.now. (404) 288-8097

EAST ATLANTA VILLAGE, roommate wanted to share large home w/ gwm couple. $500/mo + 1/3 utilities. Contact Michael (678) 662-4876

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GRANT PARK BUNGALOW Share w/ GM. Fully furn & completely remodeled. Priv BA & full house privileges. $650/mo + utils. (404) 524-2097

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www.geocities.com/chadamongthestars2004/rent.html

MIDTOWN M looking for roommate to share sm 2 BR, 1 BA apt 1 block from park. Off st. parking, on-site laundry, hrdwds, MARTA. $400/mo + utils. Eric (404) 422-1584

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GROAN!
GLUNGH...
MMMMPPPPFF!
UUUUHHH!
SLURP!
YEAAA...
CRASH!
HEY BABY! TRAFFIC STARTED MOVING A LOT FASTER THAN I THOUGHT. HEH! HEH! THOSE DECAPITATED FLOWER STEMS FOR ME? NURSE? NURSE?!?! NURSE!!???
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DROP YOUR PANTS PRODUCTIONS will hold auditions on June 12th & 13th (callbacks) for the Atlanta premiere of a cabaret version of **Naked Boys Singing!**, the hit off-Broadway musical that has been running for 5 years. The Atlanta production will be directed by the original conceiver/director Bob Schrock. Rehearsals will begin July 27th for an August 13th opening & open run (most likely 6 shows, 55 mins each, per week). Seeking 6 actors, early 20's to late 40's, who are excellent singers & move well. All types will be considered. Auditions will be at the Atlanta Lyric Theatre, 1024 Marietta St N.W., Atlanta GA 30318. Prepare 16 bars of a Broadway upbeat and ballad (so, two selections). Bring sheet music. Accompanist provided. Bring 2 copies of a headshot (or recent photo) and resume. Full nudity will be required during the final callbacks. This is a Non-Equity production. Actors will be paid for rehearsals and performances. Rehearsals will be in the evenings. To learn more about this off-broadway production, go to: www.nakedboysinging.com. If you're interested in an audition slot or have any questions, email nbscasting@aol.com or call casting hotline (404) 376-1730

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Southern Voice, a Window Media publication, is seeking a full-time graphic designer. The ideal candidate should be highly skilled in Macintosh systems, Quark 4.0, Photoshop 6.0 and Illustrator. Applicants for this position also should be self-motivated, able to think conceptually and comfortable working under deadline pressure. Experience with newspaper and/or magazine page layout and familiarity with the fundamentals of printing is preferred.

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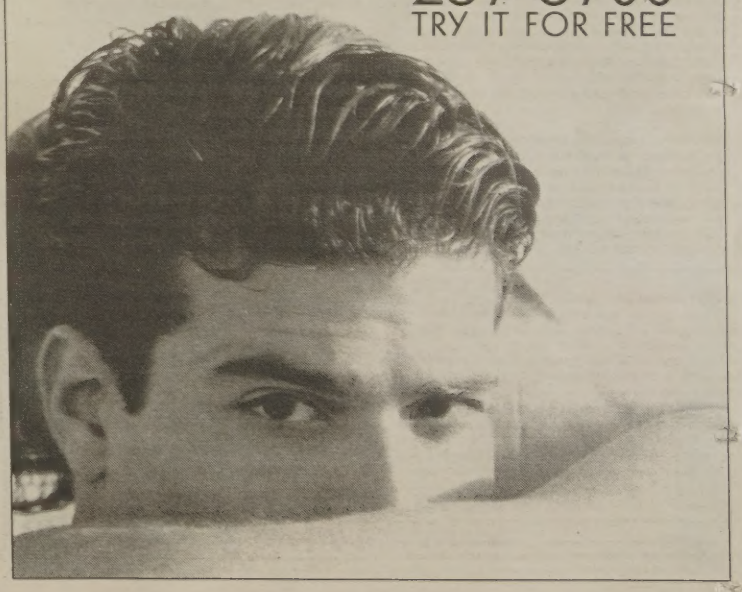

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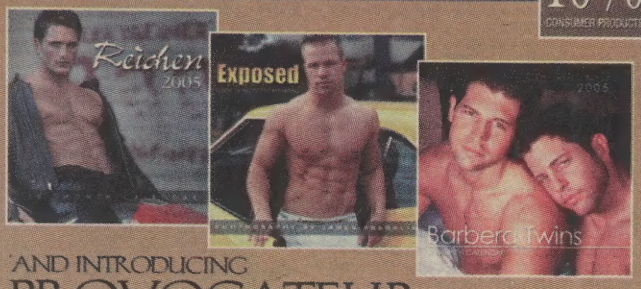

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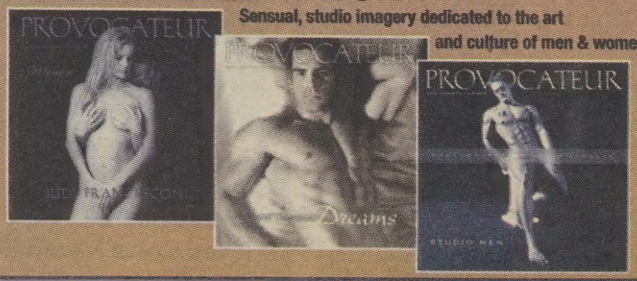

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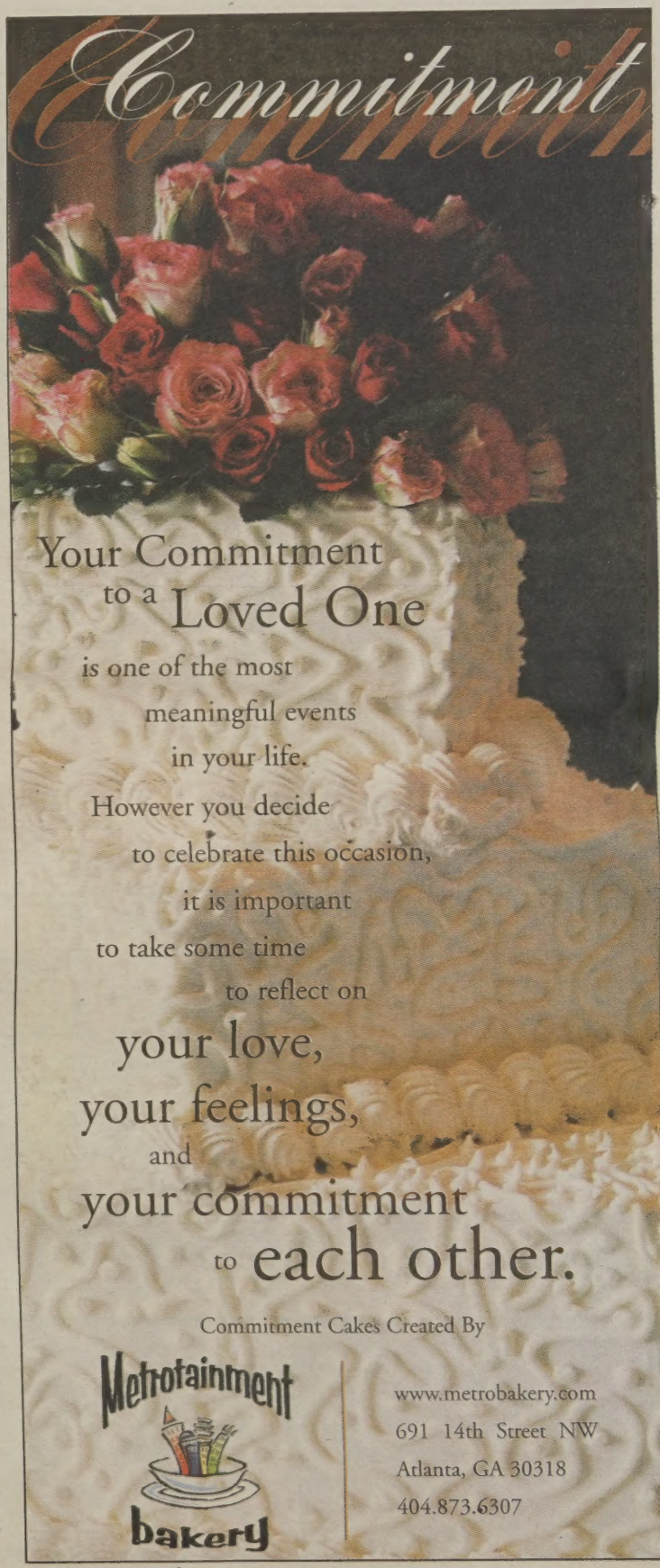
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SBM, 24, 5'7", 140lbs, D/D-free, very feminine, honest, affectionate, loveable. ISO masculine SBM, 18-65, D/D-free, honest, affectionate, for relationship, more. Savannah ☎113957

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SM, 6', 195lbs, athletic build, in great shape, interested in meeting someone who is good with their hands and want sot just have some fun. Atlanta ☎214087

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WM, 34, 6'1", 220lbs, brown/hazel, really outgoing and zany, looking for SM, 28-42, who can appreciate my outrageous side. Atlanta ☎212385

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tired of being alone. SWCM, 6'3", 235lbs, brown hair, brown eyes, HIV-, N/D, N/S, N/Drugs, daddy bear, seeks Mr. Right, 25-45, for friendship, possible LTR. Atlanta ☎116827

BOYS, BOYS, BOYS
SBM, 23, 6', 175lbs, dark complexion, smokes, very fun-loving, outgoing, sweet, sexy, down-to-earth. Looking for exact same, 18-25, must be masculine. Atlanta ☎998258

ORIGINALLY FROM CHICAGO
SBM, 42, 5'4", 150lbs, likes automobiles, cooking, dining out, jazz, gospel. Seeking SM, 18-50, same height and weight range, friends first, possibly more. Atlanta ☎995937

HI THERE!
SM, 56, business owner, 6'1", 185lbs, likes model trains/railroads, good company, fine dining, music, museums and the arts. Seeking confident, educated, good-humor, goal-oriented man for friendship ,and lasting companionship. Carrollton ☎123217

MAYBE YOU'RE THE ONE
SWM, 6', 230lbs, 53, looking for younger man, D/D-free, who's sincere, trustworthy and honest, to share walks, quiet times homes, fun times, friendship and maybe more. Atlanta ☎119981

CUTE AND AVAILABLE
SWM, 39, 5'6", professional hair technician, likes dancing, movies, dinners, joking around. Seeking like-minded male, 23-50, friends first, possibly more. Fort Lauderdale ☎117049

NO GAMES
SBM, 24, 6'2", 161lbs, tall, slender, goatee, sideburns, short hair, very attractive, nice, down-to-earth, likes dining out, movies, walks in the park. Seeking SM, 21-35, friends first, more. Whitfield ☎115970

LET'S TALK
SHM, 23, 5'8", athletic build, enjoys dining out, movies, music, romance, laughter, the outdoors, good conversation, good company and more. Seeking outgoing, intelligent, down-to-earth SW/HM, 18-48, for friendship, maybe more. Cantonment ☎992815

MUSCULAR COUNTRY BOY
Masculine WM, 42, looking for muscular, fit WM, 30-45, for friendship and dating first, possible ITR. Portsmouth ☎983465

SINGLE PHYSICIAN
GWM, 41, 5'7", 153lbs, fit, looks younger than stated age. Intelligent, sensitive, honest, flexible, romantic, passionate, articulate, and financially secure. Although I enjoy the finer things in life, they are not my priority; spirituality and faith are more important. Seeking well-educated professional GWM, between the ages of 33-45, who is seeking companionship and perhaps genuine intimacy, he should be comfortable with himself and mature. Must be able to hold an intelligent conversation and should enjoy travel, dining, companionship, etc. Atlanta ☎975433

READY FOR RELATIONSHIP
SWM, 50, likes going out, having fun, looking for that right guy. You: SH/WM, 35-50, would like to share our common interests. Port Saint Joe ☎976365

A REAL RELATIONSHIP
SBM, 22, seeks SBM, 18-22, who is compatible, down-to-earth, real, not about games, and has great communication skills. Fayetteville St Mall ☎943499

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!
SM, 23, 5'7", 155lbs, HIV+, enjoys movies, hanging out, music, reading, having fun. Seeking SM, 18-40, N/S, for relationship. Must be real and honest. Memorial Square ☎939511

DETROIT NATIVE
SM, 42, 5'7", 165lbs, blond/blue, looking for a male, 18-42, easygoing, laidback. Hoping to meet you soon! Unadilla ☎937435

TOP GUN
SBM, 41, 160lbs, wavy/brown, enjoys quiet times with that special someone; SW/BM, 22-28. I enjoy movies, getting to know you! Pensacola ☎937199

WHY WAIT?
SWM, 44, 6'4", 185lbs HIV+ but healthy, athletic, enjoys sports, music, outdoors, life's simple pleasures. Seeking similar male, 25-48, easygoing, laid-back, for nights out or quiet evenings at home. Atlanta ☎932144

SEEK QUALITY GUY
Very attractive WM, 19, bottom, likes good conversation and having fun. Looking for intelligent down-to-earth guy who can hold a conversation, for intimate friendship, maybe more. Douglasville ☎926555

NEW TO THE AREA
WM, 5'9", 150lbs, brown/green, wants to meet a new friend, 18-26. Let's start with dating and see what happens. Alpharetta ☎922959

Been Glanced ?

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We had a class together, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We looked at each other the whole semester and didn't say a word. I regret it. ☎216134

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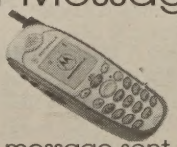

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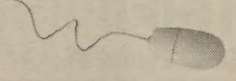

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CAN YOU LOOSEN YOUR TIE?
SBM, 33, 5'9", N/S, professional, independent, lives alone, seeks responsible, independent, masculine WM, 25-42, N/S, who also likes to unwind, have fun, dine, watch movies, travel. Atlanta ☎880412

Women Seeking Women

GREAT SENSE OF HUMOR?
SF, 5'4", 142lbs, loves going to movies, reading, learning about different cultures, playing pool, dining out. Would like to meet a female, 22-30, who is into the same. College Park ☎983134

SOFT BUTCH ISO FRIEND
Soft butch, 42, enjoys traveling, movies, cooking, more. Seeking honest, mature, soft butch, for dating, companionship, maybe more. Ellenwood. ☎229885

KNOCK, KNOCK...
who's out there? Attractive, intelligent GWPF, 52, with good heart and sense of humor, stable, creative vegetarian, enjoys learning, travel, outdoors, good conversation. Seeking similar, 44-55, N/S. Pine Lake ☎236161

PENSACOLA DREAMIN'
SWF, 38, tall, slender, professional, femme seeks someone to share life's passions and adventures with. Enjoy travel the outdoors, motorcycles, dining, quiet times. Pet lovers a must! Pensacola ☎123123

SINCREE AND WARM-HEARTED
Affectionate GBF, 30, 5'3", soft butch, full-figured, auburn/hazel, in retail, likes scifi films, reading, picnics, weekend getaways, clubs, people, pets, sporting events, cooking. Seeking similar SF for happiness and LTR. Riverdale ☎125692

JUST BE YOURSELF
SBF, 30, 110lbs, butch, enjoys basketball, wrestling, movies, dining out, walks in the park, the outdoors, clubbing, dancing and more. Seeking laidback, confident, honest SF, 21-30, for friendship, maybe more Atlanta ☎990961

A LOVE STORY
SBF, 33, 5'3", 150lbs, fun-loving, adventurous, spontaneous, open-minded, drugs, drama, disease-free. Seeking like-minded female, 25-45, social drinker, likes quiet nights home, parks, movies. Birmingham ☎909668

AS YOU TRULY ARE
SBF, 38, 5'3", average build, light brown complexion, Sagittarius, N/S, feminine, honest, sincere, seeks BF, 28-42, N/S, who is willing to be herself, respectful of others beliefs. Belvedere ☎827034

SPONTANEITY IS A PLUS
SWF, 34, enjoys life, boating, jet skis, traveling, friends, laughter, the outdoors, movies, romance, honesty and more. Seeking intelligent, honest, humorous SWF, 28-45, for friendship, maybe more. Lawrenceville ☎994120

CAN WE GROW TOGETHER?
SBF, 25, 5'8", 125lbs, Scorpio, enjoys playing pool, basketball, going skating, more. Seeking SF, 23-32, can be themselves, won't bring drama or games, dating, possible LTR. Alpharetta ☎975048

LET'S WORK IT OUT
BF, 5'3", 146lbs, reddish-brown hair, looking for a mature, sexy, spontaneous woman, 35-36, to share friendship first. If it becomes more, great. Jonesboro ☎926024

SEEKING SOULMATE
35-year-old SBF, attractive, full-figured, soft-stud, 5'9", hazel eyes, light brown complexion, enjoys sports, romantic walks, dining out, movies, traveling, good conversation, seeks feminine female, for friendship, possible relationship. Griffin ☎897775

PERSONAL BEST
SBF, 32, no dependents, self-employed, enjoys singing, dancing, skating, bowling, reading, very God-fearing, seeking SF, 32-45, who is the best person she can be. Atlanta ☎896523

WALK WITH ME
SBF, 28, wants to meet a woman for romantic weekends, filled with dinner, walks on the beach and dancing. ☎891514

SOMETHING TO BUILD ON
SBF, 26, Taurus, smoker, 5'2", mother, lives in Mobile AL, construction worker, affectionate, seeks domestic woman, 18-45, for friendship first, possible relationship down-the-line. ☎830026

HELLO OUT THERE
Attractive GBF, 30, 5'6", 140lbs, seeks easygoing, yet aggressive, passionate, trustworthy woman, 27-36, who enjoys movies, music and excitement. Rome ☎793850

BUTCH MASSAGE THERAPIST
Butch SF, 49, N/S, enjoys walking dog. Seeking more top than not femme, versed in both rolls, looking for part-time love and dinner date. I'm spiritual, not religious. Briarcliff ☎206720

AGGRESSIVE FEMME ISO...
other attractive, feminine lesbians, 27-35, for friendship, casual dating and possible LTR. I'm a goal-oriented, hard-working SBF, 27, who enjoys good company and a sincere, drama-free life. Marietta ☎207824

COOL WE BE
Romantic, athletic, hard-working, quiet SBF, 22, 5'4", 125lbs, trustworthy, honest, understanding, independent, enjoys movies, dining, skiing horseback, racing and more. Seeking honest, independent, feminine SB/WF, 25-29, 145-175lbs, for possible LTR. Stockbridge ☎207538

BEEN AROUND THE WORLD
SBF, 22, 5'9", 130lbs, entertainer, seeking beautiful, tall, athletic SF, 19-30, under 130lbs, light complexion, for friendship, dating, possibly more. Bolen Town ☎995517

BE HONEST AND FRANK
GBF, 40, 5'6", masculine, loves sports, working, friends, family, dining out, the outdoors and more. Seeking feminine, confident, intelligent SF, 30-44, for friendship and more. Atlanta ☎990759

ISO TRUE SOUTHERN BUTCH
Beautiful, exotic, full-figured make-up artist, 39, carefree, loves martinis and a mean game of Scrabble. Seeking a butch who truly understands the butch/femme dynamic. Must be independent. N/S, N/Drugs. Smyrna ☎947168

TORN JEANS AND JERSEYS
Confident GWF, 42, funny, cute, outgoing, romantic. You: feminine, attractive, easygoing, confident, sexy, strong sense of self, can wear torn jeans, football jerseys, baseball hats and look like a woman. Atlanta ☎925362

LET THE FUN BEGIN
GWPF, 40, interested in meeting emotionally available, stable woman, 35-48, with a healthy family relationship. I enjoy the ballet, musicals, theater, biking. Atlanta ☎840258

LOOKING 4 FUN
Attractive, mature, fun SWF, 20, 5'10", 180lbs, brown/brown, tan complexion. Seeking attractive, fun-loving girl, 18-30, for friendship, maybe more. ☎956901

MORE THAN WORDS
SBF, 43, butch, shy at first, enjoys watching movies, biking, walking, jazz, romantic weekends, seeking a loving SF, 38-48, to make things work with. Atlanta ☎947461

LETS FLY
Down-to-earth, loving, caring, sensitive SBF, soft butch, 52, 5'7", N/Drugs, very independent, secure, art, music, reading, quiet times at home. Seeking semidependent, stable, secure, spiritual, drug-free SB/HF, 45-55. Atlanta ☎917172

WHAT A GOOD CATCH
Honest, intelligent, stable, funny SWF, 41, loving character and strength, shy at first, warms up quickly. Seeking compatible, compassionate mate, 32-42, to give my faithful, loving heart to. Snellville ☎901183

SINGLE MOTHER
Attractive BF, 27, college student, in search of Miss Right. I've been looking for her for a while. She will become a good friend to me, hopefully leading to LTR. Portsmouth ☎204751

GOT TIL IT'S GONE
SBPF, 44, enjoys traveling, concerts, movies, clubs, playing pool. Seeking honest, mature, feminine female, 30-43, for dating, companionship, more. Ellenwood ☎201165

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
SBF, 42, soft stud, N/S, N/D, seeks feminine, honest, mature SF, 30-55, for friendship and more. Just be yourself. La Grange ☎111515

LET'S GET TOGETHER
SBF, 42, looking for that special woman to make my world complete. I'm very level-headed, likes going out, staying home. Seeking same, good sense of humor. ☎953175

BROOKLYN ORIGINAL
SBF, 41, 5'5", great cook, loves pets, sports, beaches. Seeking feminine lady, age and race not important, interested in good times, chilling, traveling, plays, more. ☎954132

CENTERED IN SPIRIT
Attractive SWF, 48, average build, health-conscious, emotionally stable, spiritual, attends church, leads metaphysical life. Seeking open, spiritual partner with kind, gentle, compassionate heart. Douglasville ☎948822

SMILES EASILY!
Fit, active GBF, 52, loves movies, stores, the arts, theater, films. Looking for GF, 45-60, to share these interests. Romantic relationship. Atlanta ☎948541

ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME?
SBF, 45, seeks , tall, curvy, slightly overweight, private SB/HF, 37-48, who enjoys conversation, romance, one on one time,who enjoys life. Atlanta ☎942070

LOOKING FOR LTR
SF, 36, 5'6", 195lbs, stud, looking for feminine lady, 25-30, who is romantic, down-to-earth, intelligent. Norcross ☎935646

BE MY FRIEND FIRST
SBF, N/S, loves reading love novels, fishing, black authors, music. Seeking similar female, 23-40, stud, for possible relationship. ☎933192

TAKE A CHANCE
SBF, 37, soft stud, professional, enjoys travel, concerts, movies, the beach, going to clubs occasionally. Looking for honest, mature, feminine female, 25-35, who likes the same things I do. Jacksonville ☎921287

I CAN LOVE YOU BETTER
SWF, 38, 5'2", 100lbs, brown/brown, Aquarius, enjoys camping, occasional clubbing, and movies. Seeking WF, 28-43, employed, drama-free. ☎761193

Just Friends

WANT TO MEET YOU
SBF, 22, looking for friends to hang out with and share conversation. I'm into movies, music and more. Atlanta ☎236601

LOVES SCI-FI MOVIES
BF, 23, new to Atlanta, interested in meting new friends to help me get acquainted with the city. ☎236572

SHARE THE FUN
Black lesbian couple, health-conscious, fun, looking to meet mature, 35+ lesbian couples for friendship only! We're interested in outdoor activities, cookouts, cultural functions, dinners and travel. No smokers, no drugs! Jonesboro ☎864659

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